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SOUL-WINNING
SERMONS

T. B. UBER



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SOUL-WINNING SERMONS

BY

T. B. UBER

Pastor English Lutheran Church,
Princeton, Illinois.

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TO MY FRIEND
HARVEY DANIEL HOOVER, Ph. D.
THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED



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Introduction

The method of evangelism used in our Soul-Winning Missions in the English Lutheran Church, Princeton, Illinois grew from an effort to interest a large group of unchurched people in an adult class for the study of the Christian Religion. The members of the church would come to such a class but this other large group would not come. Various methods were tried. They were not successful. We felt we had failed. It seemed there was no way to reach them. Then it was that we conceived the idea of putting on a Great Soul-Winning Mission which would be an evangelism entirely in harmony with the traditions of our Lutheran church and thoroughly Biblical. The pastor would do the preaching. The mission was a call to all who would hear to come and listen to a clear statement of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion. It aimed to arouse those who were then Christians to greater activity in the Kingdom of God and to win to Christ those who have never believed in Him. It sought to so attractively present Jesus Christ and His offer of Salvation that persons would be drawn to Him in love and voluntarily choose Him for the Master of their lives. It endeavored to arouse a serious concern for the welfare of the soul and then to create a desire for further instruction concerning the way of Salvation. This instruction to be given by the pastor in a special adult catachetical class to be formed at the close of the mission and to continue each Thursday evening during the Lenten season. It was made plain that no one would be asked to unite with the church until he had received adequate information concerning the Christian religion and understood what it meant to be a follower of Christ. At Easter an opportunity was given to each inquirer who had investigated Christianity to unite with the church of his or her choice. The mission lasted three weeks. A volunteer chorus choir of seventy-five voices sang each night accompanied by an orchestra. A force of more than seventy personal workers assisted

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by holding meetings for prayer, visitation, and invitation during the day. The people came. Night after night the church was packed. A class of over two hundred interested souls was formed in the local church. Three of the other churches of the city organized similar classes. More than one hundred members were added to the church, and the spiritual life of the community was wonderfully quickened. God greatly blessed these sermons here in Princeton. May His blessing accompany them as they go forth in His name and may they continue to win souls for the Kingdom.

T. B. UBER.

Lent 1923.

Foreward

BEFORE me lie a few of the sermons preached in Princeton, Illinois by the Lutheran pastor and our friend, Rev. T. B. Uber. They are not literary theoretical discourses prepared as essays for the public to read. They are not a set of sermons for the Church-year and simply for the edifications of the saints. They are not "The Way of Salvation in the Lutheran Church", or "The Way Made Plain" so much as a call to cold Christians and a lost world to get ready to ask for the way of Salvation. In other words, the author believes that he and his Lutheran Church should call a perishing world to be saved and with his own soul on fire has given to the Church in general a sample of his own local work, hoping that the great results in Princeton, Illinois will be duplicated in all other congregations and charges. What we need above all today in the Lutheran Church of the world is a sound, sane evangelism to call the world to search the Scriptures and find Christ and Salvation—an eternal life beginning with power, now. May this little volume help many.

February, 1923

S. P. LONG,

Chicago.

Reconsecration

A Crusade for Christ

Text.—“Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.”—Numbers 13:30.

I WANT to speak to you in this opening service of our Great Soul-winning Mission on the subject, “A Crusade for Christ.” The church is a crusade rather than a sheepfold. “For He calleth His own sheep by name and leadeth them out—and the sheep follow Him, for they know His voice.” The world needs business houses and business propaganda (advertising campaigns). The world needs educational institutions and their propaganda. The world needs insurance companies and their propaganda. The world needs courts of justice and judicial propaganda. The world needs churches and religious propaganda. It is the business of the bank to handle money properly. The business of the school is to educate. The business of an insurance company is to sell insurance. It is the business of a court of justice to administer justice. Nobody finds fault or criticizes when they function in our life. Now it is the business of the church to teach the Christian religion and no one should find fault when we attend strictly to our own business.

There are certain things which you expect of a bank, a business house or an educational institution and there are certain things which you do not expect of them. You don't go to a bank to buy your shoes, or bread or to hear the Gospel. There are certain things which people have a right to expect

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of a church and there are certain things which they have a right to expect of a christian and there are also certain things which they have no right to expect. When a church or a christian functions according to the directions of the Holy word of God the honor and esteem of the community is merited.

We learn lessons from business houses. There are certain times when they have sales. They advertise. They make special efforts to revive their trade. They do things to attract the attention of people to their business. There are times when the church gets tired, sleepy, or lazy and needs an awakening. There is need for a crusade for Christ. This mission is held in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ Whose we are and Whom we serve with the fervent hope that those who are now Christians may be quickened and those who are not Christians may be won to Christ.

The time has come for the church of Christ to take an inventory of the world's liabilities and of her own spiritual resources, responsibilities, and opportunities and to arouse her loyal constituency to enter upon a great crusade by a thrilling, inspiring, impelling call to service such as came from the heart of a deeply spiritual and thoroly consecrated soul, charged with a burning passion for God in the long ago when he said, "Let us go up at once and possess the land, for we are well able to overcome it."

Caleb came before the assembled hosts of Israel with a great program of propaganda. They had gathered to hear the report of an intelligence committee who had just returned from making a survey of the promised land. They are now ready to report. It is an historic occasion. It is of momentous importance to Israel and to all the world. Israel had not all agreed about the work before them. There had

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been some bitter difference of opinion. Some were pessimistic, some optimistic, some wanted to go ahead, some wanted to turn back, and some wanted to stand still. They needed inspiration, encouragement, a driving impulse to keep them moving forward. They needed something to unite their forces and to cement them together. Those who were zealous for the cause hoped this report would do it. One of the committee stands before the assembly. They wait with breathless suspense his message. What will he say? He speaks: "It is a truly wonderful country," he says, "a land flowing with milk and honey." Then he displays a great cluster of grapes from the valley of Eschol. They press closely around him for the next word, interested, enthusiastic, greatly enthusiastic, greatly encouraged. Then he says, "But there are giants there. There are walled cities there, and we can't conquer the land." All was immediately changed to discouragement and confusion. They were ready to abandon all hope of ever reaching their destination. Then it was that Caleb arose and stilled the people before Moses and plead with them not to abandon their God-given task but to continue their crusade. He outlined a plan of campaign the accomplishment of which would have been worthy of any nation. I want to direct your attention to this program of Caleb, so that we who are here assembled may catch the vision of this man of God, and with the vision get the passion, and with the passion get the power to move ourselves and our constituency under the enabling and directing power of the Holy Spirit to realize in our generation the thing which Caleb was unable to do in that generation. His message is a great heart and soul battle call to every soldier of Jesus Christ to put on the whole armour

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of God, unsheathe his sword and to hasten forth under the banner and leadership of King Immanuel to battle and conquer in His Name.

1. The Task. Let us look first at the task which Caleb set for his generation. What was it? It was for Israel to completely obey God—to occupy the Land of Canaan. He didn't say it was easy. He saw the giants too, and the walled cities. But he saw also the springs, the flowing streams, the pasture lands and the vintage grounds and the promise of God, "Surely I will give it thee." In our crusade we must first see and define our task. The church is a divine institution. An organism placed in the world with a specific work to do. She differs from the other organizations of this world as a tree differs from a brick wall in structure. She has a definite work to do and she can't do everything. She must know her business and attend to it strictly. In these days there is a marked difference of opinion as to the function of the church. Some say the church should be a big policeman and keep order in the world. Others that the church should be a political organization to control the governments of the world. Others that the church should be a labor institution to protect the interests of the men and women who work. Still others that the church is a sort of historical society, a social club, or an amusement center to entertain the public. If the church becomes a policing force she must resort to the sword. If she turns politician she will soon become as corrupt as the Democrats think the Republicans are, or as the Republicans think the Democrats are, or as corrupt as the roman church during the dark ages. If the church turns into a labor organization she will soon parallel the I. W. W.'s or the Bolsheviki. If the church turns to society she will soon cease to func-

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tion in a spiritual manner. No, the task of the church does not lie in any of these spheres. She is to carry a distinctly spiritual message and bear a spiritual responsibility to this present material world. She is to give birth to sons of God and to nurture them into Christian character and manhood. Her task is more than to enjoy her faith, more than to hold and defend her faith. It is to propagate her faith. And that not by armies nor by political programs, nor by complete and perfect organization, but by preaching and living the Gospel. But some one says, "Should not the church correct social, moral and political wrongs?" I reply, "Yes, her influence should do so." That is the by-product of the church. Such organizations as the Anti-Saloon League, the Red Cross Society and the Y. M. C. A. are not the church. They are by-products of the church. A Christian should radiate the influence of Christ where-ever he is—in state halls, society, in business. In this way the power of the church is felt while she goes on doing her heaven destined work—transforming men. The salvation of men is the tremendous, difficult task of the church. It is her objective. Her promised land. Some one says the task is narrow. Let it be so. It is as wide as Christ and the Bible. A narrow stream charged with energy cuts through granite rock her course, while a broad sluggish stream soon loses itself in a marshy stagnant swamp.

2. Going to the Task. "Let us go up at once." The second thing Caleb said in his campaign was, "Let us go to the task. We must get out of this wilderness. The job to be done is not here. It is up in Canaan. We can't do anything until we get there. We are too far away." In our crusade we must also go to our task. No matter how strong the arm, it

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avails nothing when out of reach of the opponent. No matter what force or deadly power in the weapon, when out of reach of the foe it is powerless. The argument is let us engage the opposition. Let us cross swords with them. Let us go to the front. So long as our money, ships, munitions and men were here in the United States they didn't help the allies much. We had to get them overseas. We had to take them to the task at whatever cost. Then they were effective and not until then. That is exactly what Caleb wanted done. No tarrying, no loitering. We must get out of our wilderness too. There are too many temptations to return to Egypt. We are too near the flesh pots. We must go to the task. We can't wait for it to come to us. We must start something. We can't just hold out a net and wait. We can't just set a trap of modern device and ingenuity and let it work automatically when a soul comes along. Our wilderness may be indifference, apathy, spiritual paralysis, or laziness. We must get out of it, whatever it is, and get to the front line trenches and seek an active sector. Let us look closer at the wonderful appeal of Caleb. "Let us" means co-operation, team work. "Go" means progress, getting somewhere. On this mount enough. "Up" requires power to meet resistance. "At once" means now, immediately. "Up, this is the day" was the cry of Deborah to over cautious Barak. In a football game between Bucknell and Gettysburg colleges at Lewisburg, Pa., Bucknell was driving her opponent for a first down at every rush. The student body was frantic with the thrill of victory for the home team. Nothing could stop the terrific line plunges. Gettysburg's men fought like tigers but they could do nothing with Bucknell supported by such a spirit in the student body. The Gettysburg coach saw the situa-

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tion and he saw too that the strength of Bucknell was in the student body rather than in the team. What could be done? In a few more plays a touchdown would be made. A sudden inspiration. A whistle sounded. All playing stopped. A new man was sent to the Gettysburg line. One of the players was taken out. Cheering stopped. The students were puzzled, they wondered what had happened. The whistle sounded again and the game proceeded. Gettysburg turned the tide and soon pushed Bucknell back until they gained all the lost ground, made a touchdown and won the game. All because a coach saw his task and went up at once.

Can folks have the same enthusiasm in going up to this spiritual task as to the material ones? Why not? Are we not spiritual too? The one has back of it the impelling, driving impulse of material and physical well-being. The other has back of it our spiritual well-being. The one is a bread and butter problem. It must be done or there will be physical suffering. This necessity keeps folks at work whether they will or not. To go up to our greater spiritual task requires a similar driving persuasion. And have we not got it in our spiritual welfare? You say somehow it seems different. I grant it. The appeal must be made on a different basis. Babies will live if not baptized. Children will grow if not catechized and confirmed. Men will prosper if not church members. Folks know this. But I believe there is or can be developed within the church a spiritual background so sensitive to the appeal of Christ that at His word will go at once to the task for which we are fitted. But that background must be there. Caleb was a great leader, but his appeal was in vain, for there was nothing there to grip it. You can't lead if you have nothing to follow you. The expert miner

gets no coal from the hill if there is no coal there. You can't catch fish no matter how skilled you are if there are no fish in the stream. You can't carry water in a sieve. The bottom had dropped out of Israel.

3. Doing the Task. "And possess the land." The third thing that Caleb said was let us do the task. Possess the land. That was after all their real objective, not seeing the land, not going up to the land but actually possessing it. Success with the hunter is not in seeing the game nor in getting within range of it but in actually bagging it. Success with the physician is not in correct diagnosis, nor proper treatment but in curing the patient. These cities, these vineyards, these streams are to be theirs. God had so willed it. Now he pleads with them to possess them. Our crusade is not over until we possess the world for Christ. The soldier's work was not over when he reached the battle field. It really only began then. Then came the test of strength, endurance and skill. The struggle cry came before the shout of victory. Christ wants us to win. "Ye are the light of the world. Ye are the salt of the earth." "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." We are determined to win. That is why we have united in this Great Soul-Winning Mission. We have united our forces like so many strands twined together into one mighty cord of formidable strength with which to bind the strong leaders of the evil forces for the emancipation of human souls. We want to do our part in this great crusade in leadership and in the ranks. But to do this we must have a burning passion for souls. That must be our cross as it was the cross of our great Captain. From His bleeding side on calvary in great travail came forth the church and from the church will come forth adherents just

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in proportion to the travail of the souls of her constituency. We want our people to do what Caleb could not get his people to do. But we must be prepared to pay the price of possession. "He that goeth forth with weeping bearing precious seed shall doubtless come again with rejoicing bringing his sheaves with him." It takes just such a yearning for lost souls, a longing of breaking hearts until they come. Such earnestness, such passion will turn sinners to God and overcome the world for His sake. Beloved, don't you think we have been plowing and sowing long enough to expect a harvest, a reaping time? May the joy of the harvest be ours.

4. Able to do the Task. "For we are well able to overcome it." The fourth thing that Caleb said to his generation was that they were able to conquer. The Hebrew words for able and overcome are almost identical. This means that if we are able, if we have the ability, we assume with the ability the moral obligation to use that ability aright. They were to do their part. They were to go as far as they could. They were to use all their available strength plus God. When a person is able to conquer it is pitiable to see him fail. They were able for God was their strength. He had said, "I will be with you, I will give you the land." He had gone before them as they came out of Egypt. Would He abandon them now? After all it was God's work. And He was ready and willing to help them possess the land which He had promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. "Well able to overcome" means that they were prepared to do the work. Preparation is a large part of the secret of our power. Do we belong to the 22,000 who were rejected because they were afraid? Do we belong to the 9,700 who were rejected because they were inefficient? Or do we belong

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to the 300 who were chosen because they were ready to go at once? We need very careful preparation for this Mission of Soul-Winning. We need efficient workers. Our workers must frequently go before the throne for inspection and before the Lamb for equipment. We must be prepared to possess the land for the sake of being a blessing to others. They were advocates of personal liberty rather than personal responsibility. That spirit weakened them. "Well able to overcome" means consecration to the crusade. It means that we will put our best into this great effort. It means that we will always look to God for our enabling. He is the real source of our power. We need no new machinery, just lubricate, adjust and adapt what we have. We need no new lines of communication, just repair and use the old ones. We need no new channels for God's grace, just open up the old ones and keep them open. We need no new well, just redig the old ones the Phillistines have filled up.

The Word and the Sacraments are enough. Let us preach and live this Word of God. Here is our most telling argument for Christ. We are doing God's work. We are doing it under His direction. We are doing it for His glory. Here is our power. He will never leave us nor forsake us. "Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." "I can do all things through Christ Who strengtheneth me." "My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ." Beloved, the crusade is on. It is a worthy one, a holy one. We are well on the way. Other pastors and people in this church have wrought valiantly and many of them have passed beyond the Jordan. Their mantles have fallen upon us. Let us go forward in the name of Christ. Let us serve our present age. Let

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us fulfill our calling. Let us not only hold our position but under God advance the cause of Christ and His kingdom. "Let us go up at once and possess the land for we are well able to overcome it."

Following Afar Off

Text.—“But Peter followed Him afar off.”—Matthew 26:58.

WE WERE talking together last night about hearing the call of Jesus to a crusade for soul-winning. We noted that He calls His own sheep by name and leadeth them on to victory. We would like to connect the message this evening very closely with that one. There are some who have heard the call of Jesus but hear it no longer because they have been immersed in sin. There are some who do not hear His voice because they are not His own. There are others who do not hear it distinctly because they are listening to too many other calls. A friend of mine entered a telephone booth in a depot in a large city and was connected by the operator with a man in a distant part of the city. But he could not hear the voice of the speaker distinctly. He asked him to repeat again and again. At last the man said to him, “close the door of the booth and shut out the sound of the voices in the depot.” He did this and then he could hear distinctly. If we want to hear the voice of Jesus we must shut out the other voices. Then there are some who are too far away. There is grave danger from following too far off. May the Holy Spirit help me to lay heavily upon your hearts and my own our personal responsibility for Christian service. I trust that it shall become clear to us that our efficiency in service is decreased in proportion as we increase the distance between us and our Lord. That John reclining on the bosom of Jesus was a better example for us to follow than Peter who was skulking along the fringe of a crowd of unbelievers.

FOLLOWING AFAR OFF

The incident of our text is a part of the Passion history. They were leading Jesus away to Caiaphas, the high priest where the scribes and elders were assembled. All the Disciples had fled from Him. Peter followed at a distance. They tried to find false witnesses. At length two came forth and said, "This fellow said He was able to destroy the temple of God and build it up in three days." Then His accusers were content. They had evidence now. Peter was in the palace and a damsel said to him, "Thou wast also with Jesus." He denied it. Then on the porch, another maid saw him. She said, "This fellow was also with Jesus." With an oath he said, "I do not know the man." Later others said, "Thou art one of them." He began to curse and to swear and say, "I know not the man."

1. Peter was once very close to Jesus. Andrew had brought him. He dared to love Jesus. He was proud to be His disciple. He didn't care who knew it. He was out and out for Jesus. He had some close contacts with Jesus. He made some great declarations about Him. When Jesus asked, "Whom do men say that I am, and whom do ye say that I am?" It was Peter who answered, "Thou art the Christ the Son of the Living God." That was a great answer. Christ approved it. He was pretty close then. On the Mount of Transfiguration, he said, "Lord, it is good for us to be here." He was close to his Lord up there. In answer to the question of Jesus, "Will ye also go away?" He replied, "Lord to whom shall we go, Thou hast the words of eternal life." He was pretty close. In the death chamber, on the sea, in the Garden, in the upper room he was pretty close to Jesus, and when he was close he was happy, strong, safe and useful.

2. Peter gets far away from Jesus. It didn't take

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very long either. It didn't take much. Just a bit of doubt, a little fear and some mistrust. Something came between Peter and Jesus and we find him following afar off. A man is pretty far away from his friend who is in trouble and surrounded by his enemies when he says, "I do not know Him." To say I do not know the man is a long ways from saying, "Thou are the Christ the Son of the Living God." He doesn't look very much like the fellow who a few hours before was ready to fight a whole mob for Jesus. He didn't want to know Him now. He was pretty far away when he lied, cursed, and swore. He was weak, unhappy, unsafe and useless.. He doesn't look much like a rock now. He doesn't look much like a man. He looks a whole lot like a coward and a traitor. He wasn't much of an asset for the cause of Christ just then. He was not only pretty useless but also in great danger. He was in worse danger than when he was sinking in the sea. He was near Jesus then but now he is far away. He is like a sick man far away from medical aid. Like an army cut off from its base of supplies. Like a man hanging over a precipice by a weak rope. He was in a pretty bad crowd that night. It took a great soul to confess Christ there. Christ didn't have many friends that night.

3. But he was still following. Though far away, he was still following. That part of it was good. There was a spiritual back ground there yet. There was something for Christ to see when He looked. Like doubting Thomas, he pursued the proper course. You remember Thomas assembled with the folks who did not doubt in the time of his doubt. That was a fine thing to do. So Peter still had his face in the right direction. He hadn't turned his back on Christ. Though there were mountains between him and His

FOLLOWING AFAR OFF

Lord, he had not turned away entirely. He had not openly and frequently indulged in sin. He was still somewhat decent and respectable. There was still hope for him. We can get a good distance away and still keep our faces towards the cross. That is the one bright spot in the picture. He was still looking the right way and still following though it was far off. Thank God the cross is on the hill top and can always be seen from the valley of sin.

4. Peter came back to the Master. He remembered that he once loved that Man. He remembered the deeds of Jesus. He saw Jesus looking at him. He went out into that night of separation from Christ weeping bitterly. He came back in the early dawn of a great new day in the sun light at the empty tomb. He saw His Lord alive. He was reinstated. He thrice told the Blessed Master that he loved Him. He became a strong defender and propagandist of the faith. See him on the day of Pentecost. O, the courage of that rock then. How he preached, how he lived for Christ. How he died for Jesus. Tradition says he met his death by crucifixion with his head downward. When he was close again, he was strong, happy, safe and useful. Are there any here tonight who once loved the Lord, who were once very close to Him, who were then happy, strong, safe and useful and who for any reason have permitted something to separate you from your Master? If you are all following up close, thank God, take courage and go ahead. But if there are any who are following afar off, will you not close up now? Get near to the cross this very night. Make good yet. Be a rock for Christ. You may if you will, be happy, strong, safe and useful in the Kingdom of God.

Trusting in the Mountains

Text.—“Woe to them that are in ease in Zion, and that trust in the mountain of Samaria.”—Amos 6:1.

IN THIS chapter the Prophet Amos gives us a wonderful picture of the times in which he lived. And as conditions at the present time seem to parallel those of his day in many instances, I want to quote to you what he says: “Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and that trust in the mountain of Samaria. Ye that put far away the evil day and cause the seat of violence to come near: that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; that chant to the sound of the viol and invent to themselves instruments of music, like David: that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph. Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive, and the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed. The Lord hath sworn by Himself, saith the Lord the God of hosts, I abhor the excellency of Jacob, and hate his palaces: therefore will I deliver up the city with all that is therein.” There is one phrase here which vividly describes the daily life of pleasure loving, self-satisfied, luxurient, self-indulgent people. That phrase is “At ease in Zion.” We want to note the condition of the lives of the people at this time, its cause, the results, and then make an application to our present times.

1. The condition. “Woe to them that are at ease in Zion.” What does at ease in Zion mean? At ease means a state of being comfortable, freedom from

TRUSTING IN THE MOUNTAINS

pain, trouble, annoyance, relief from constraint, labor, effort, or responsibility, quiet, freedom from formality. A state of being amused or entertained, relaxation. It means idleness and at the same time intense activity. Idleness regarding right, activity regarding wrong. Let me picture it before you in my own way. But you must help me by using your imaginations. There they are, great, big, strong, husky men lying upon beds of ivory, stretching themselves upon their couches. It is just a picture of a lazy bunch sleeping and lounging. They spend a lot of their time that way. It is a bad sign when people invest too much money in beds and couches. Then let us go further. See them eating the lambs of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall. Yes, eating the very choicest food they can get. Lambs and calves. Their food must be of the young and tender variety. It is a bad sign too when folks become so particular about the food they eat. Sleeping, lounging and eating. But that is not all. They chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music. Here is their entertainment. Just our modern jazz. But let us go on with the scene. They drink wine in bowls. This is their indulgence. But now for the climax. "They anoint themselves with chief ointments." Now isn't that about the limit. No, it is not women who are doing this, but men, big strapping men.

 "Play a game of pingpong,
 Have a little chat,
 Eat a little chocolate fudge,
 Then go find your hat,
 Say you've had a jolly time
 As she waves her fan.
 Now isn't that exciting sport
 To tempt a healthy man?"

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This is the condition. And think of it. They were the church members of that time. They were God's chosen people. They were what God had to depend upon to represent Him on earth. Suppose the pastor of that crowd would have tried to put on a Soul-Winning Mission. Wouldn't he have had some time a pulling them out of their ivory beds, and from those cozy couches? How would he ever have persuaded them to eat common food, get rid of their idle songs and sensual music, and put the good, old Gospel songs there instead? My! what a time he would have had of it. That bunch would not sing in the chorus choir. They wouldn't attend prayer meetings. They wouldn't do personal work. I would not have wanted his job. "They were not concerned nor grieved for the afflictions of Joseph."

2. The Cause. Every effect has a cause. So let us inquire the cause of this spiritual apathy.

a. "They trusted in the mountain of Samaria." The mountains would protect them. They felt an outward security without God. They didn't need God. They were safe. There was adequate protection. There was the mountain. It stood as a defense between them and the foe. They were "at ease in Zion." There is no ease when there is danger of an outward attack. All is attention then. All is eagerness. The Pilgrims didn't act like these folks. Neither did the Puritans, nor the pioneers. Gideon with his three hundred acted very differently. But then they were not trusting in the mountains. They were trusting in God and in the strength which God gave them. The real reason for that terrible effeminate condition was that they felt safe and secure from enemies and therefore they abandoned themselves to idleness, pleasure and vice.

b. "They put far away the evil day." They also

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had an inward security that was paralyzing to their spiritual selves. There was no anxiety nor care about their souls. But it was an inward security without God, and without reason. There was no sensitive conscience there. No, no, it was seared long since. Death would come but not now. They didn't want to think about it. There would be a judgment when they must give an account of their spiritual responsibility for service. There would come evil days but they were far away. What was the use in bothering about it now? There is a hell but don't think about it. The evil day is the day of the Lord. They put it far away. Its thought was unwelcome.

c. The seat of violence came near. They permitted violence. There was disregard for law. There was poor enforcement of laws. Judges were corrupt and inefficient. The people could not get justice through the courts so they took the law into their own hands. Things were in a terrible condition because they trusted in the mountains.

3. The Results. All the terrible consequence of their sinful conditions are expressed in one phrase. It is this: "They were not grieved for the afflictions of Joseph." They lost their passion for souls. They cared not for the welfare of any one and they were so absorbed in self indulgence that they were unconscious of the inevitable calamity and the terrible gap opening up between them. There was national paralysis. There was spiritual lethargy. They had missed the opportunity of their day. They brought a curse upon themselves and their prosperity. "They shall go captive with the first that go captive." God took away from them their opportunity. They forfeited a chance to bless the world.

4. Application. To the thoughtful student of our modern church life there are many things which

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seem very similar to the conditions in the days of Amos. We have a lot of church members who are at ease in Zion. They are not now and have not been doing any thing for Christ for years. Yet they don't seem to be disturbed about their safety in this world or in the next. They seem to be trusting in something that is as material as the mountain of Samaria. They are paying plenty of attention to their beds and couches. They are eating the very choicest things that money can buy. They patronize the moving picture shows and all sorts of amusement places. They are very much pleased with most any sort of entertainment. They have all sorts of clubs and parties galore. And they don't seem to grieve much about the souls of men. These matters do not concern them. They are defeating the purposes of God in their own lives and in the lives of their children. These people in olden days found that God visited judgment upon them. Can we not be wise and learn from their failure? O, Church of God, let us foresake worldliness, and ease and let us put our trust in God and go forth in His name to battle and to victory. We have a great opportunity here in this mission to win souls for God. Let us do it. Let each one of us become aflame with passion for lost souls. Let us "go forth with weeping bearing precious seed, and we shall come again with rejoicing bringing our sheaves with us. "May God help us to give a good account of our time and energy during these days of great effort to win souls for Christ. May it never be said of this church that we are "at ease in Zion" that we "Trust in the mountain of Samaria" that we "put far away the evil day", that we allow "the seat of violence to come near" and that we "are not grieved for the afflictions of Joseph."

The Supreme Tragedy of the Church Member

Text.—“He that putteth his hand to the plow and looketh back is not fit for the kingdom of God.”—Luke 9:62.

LAST night we were talking about “Trusting in the Mountains.” We saw how folks got into all kinds of trouble because they were “at ease in Zion.” We noticed how they forsook God Who is the very fountain of life, and placed their trust in broken cisterns that hold no water. I am sure there were many heart decisions that it shall never be said of us that we have not been faithful to God. We have come back to this church determined that if God will place confidence in us and responsibility upon us, we will not disappoint Him. We will guard the springs of life that they may bless all. Now the message this evening is upon the subject, “The Supreme Tragedy of the Church Member,” and the text is, “He that putteth his hand to the plow and looketh back is not fit for the Kingdom of God.” The supreme tragedy of the church member is not his temptation, not his sin but it is being made unfit for the kingdom of God by choosing to remain in a state of sin. It is the abandonment of the eternal purpose of God for His life. It is the deliberate turning away from the mountain heights where he walks with God to the lower level of life where he voluntarily walks in the mire of sin. It is the voluntary surrender of his heaven determined destiny. Now to be more explicit. When a person becomes a member of the church, he takes a solemn vow. Just like he does when he is made a citizen of this country. If the citizen breaks his vow, he is a traitor. When persons are united in marriage, they take

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a solemn vow. If they break that vow, they commit adultery. When a man gives testimony before a court of justice, he takes an oath to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, etc. If he does not do so, he is guilty of perjury. Now treason, adultery and perjury are great sins against the state, the home and justice. But solemn as these vows are not one of them is as solemn as the one taken in church membership, nor are they as far reaching. For after declaring belief in God, the Father, in Jesus Christ, the Savior and in the Holy Spirit, the Guide, the candidate then solemnly says, "I renounce the devil and all his works and ways, and give myself to Thee the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in faith and obedience unto the end." That is an eternal vow. Now for a person to take that vow before God and men and to repudiate it deliberately, and to abandon his publicly declared purpose to follow God, is to my mind the greatest tragedy of a human life. It seems hardly possible that any intelligent person should be guilty of such a sin as this. And yet it seems to be true that some folks have either committed it or are in grave danger of doing so. May God grant that his message may be a preventative as well as a remedy. We can put a prop under a weak limb of a tree and save it from breaking; but what can be done after it has been broken off?

The situation is about like this in the home. Suppose there are ten children in this home. There is a large farm and lots of work to be done. The expense of upkeep is very considerable but by thrift and co-operation it is all provided and the family is happy and contented. But by and by one quits because he is offended, another because of jealousy, another because of pride, another becomes wayward,

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and another because of impurity and so on until there are only a few left. The glory of the home is gone. The love is gone out. No more happiness. The property is neglected for the lack of help. You say, "Why did they not adjust affairs in a satisfactory manner to all and keep the home intact and save the home and the hearts from breaking?" It could have been done. It should have been done. Just apply this to the church family and see how many a church is broken up and the heart of Jesus broken afresh because of the conduct of church members in spite of the fact that such conduct is unnecessary.

1. The apostate church member is a tragedy to himself. He forgets the injunction of Shakespeare, "This above all to thine own self be true, and thou canst not then be false to any man."

a. He breaks a covenant with God and man. Thus proving that morally he has collapsed. He has lost the dignity of manhood, and acts more like a jelly fish than a man.

b. He does dishonor to the most solemn word of honor that he ever uttered. Failing here, how can men trust him in lesser things?

c. He breaks the golden cord of faith, blasts a noble purpose, crucifies his will, paralyzes his conscience and lies to the Holy Spirit.

d. He either proves that he has never been converted and has thereby been living a deceitful, hypocritical life, or that he has been deceived himself about his union with God, or

e. He sins a sin for which there is no repentance as set forth in Hebrew 6:4-9. "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and having tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to

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come, if they fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame." Hebrew 10:26-31, "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of Grace?—It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

2. The apostate church member is a tragedy to the church. Not alone is he personally involved, but the church of Christ also. The bride of Christ. The institution which God has placed here in the world to remind men of sin and to call them to Himself for salvation.

a. He causes the church to be unjustly accused of weakness, of protecting hypocrites. He brings the church into a bad light by making her the subject of contempt and suspicion.

b. He by his actions keeps many people out of the church. He hurts the influence of the church in the community and in the world. For he is still recognized as a member and when he dies his folks will expect a Christian funeral service for him.

c. He mocks the church by neglecting to attend services, by open defiance, and by showing personal contempt for high and holy ideals. That hurts the church like it hurts a mother to have her son say

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that she is disreputable, whether it is true or not. It is like calling a mother a prostitute.

d. He would destroy the entire fabric of the organization of the church if his following were large enough. He would do this by his acts and words. But God sees to it that such persons have limited influence.

e. He is a dead limb on a healthy tree.

3. The apostate church member is a tragedy to Christ. Surely one of the saddest things in the life of Christ on earth must have been the denial of Peter and the betrayal by Judas. How His great yearning heart broke then when He saw men turn from Him. It breaks just the same way to-day when He sees unfaithful followers. He died of a broken heart. Why do we continue to crucify Him afresh? To turn our backs upon the church is to turn our backs upon Christ. Christ and the church are one. He is the Head, the church is His Body. The church is His Bride. He wants to present His Bride before the Father, a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be whole and without blemish. To be unfaithful to Him and His church is to repeat the tragedy on Calvary.

4. The apostate church member is a tragedy to humanity. It is a terrible manifestation of the weakness of the flesh. It shows how inconstant man is. It shows how unworthy he is of the Divine love of God. It shows how low a man can fall and how content he may be to lie down there.

a. He is an example for other church members to follow him. Everbody has some following.

b. And because of his hypocrisy, many people will never seek the church of Christ as a haven for their souls.

c. He will be the cause of the wrath of God fall-

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ing not only upon himself but upon members of his family and others. Their blood will be required at his hand; but neither shall they altogether escape for they have some light in the lives and teaching of faithful people.

This sermon is not an indictment upon any one. It is a part of a pastor's responsibility to preach the whole Word. It is the warning from the man on the watch tower who sees the enemy approaching. It is the flash of the passion of one who is trying to feed the flock of God, to tend to His sheep. It is a call of warning to prevent any one from betraying His Lord, and the call to any one who may be slipping away to come back home to God, to come back into the church, to return to faith and service. "Take heed lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." We know what the will of God is in this matter. We know too how we stand with Him. We know God wants us to do His will. We know that He will help us if we will do our part. Now is our opportunity to do a really great work for God in the churches of this community. Let us line up solid for our faith. Let us get right with God ourselves, then we can teach transgressors the way. Let us put our hand to the plow and not even look back that we may be fit for the Kingdom of God.

Back to the Altar

Text.—“And Abram went up out of Egypt unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: And there Abram called on the name of the Lord.”—Genesis 13:14.

ON ONE occasion, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Launch out into the deep and let your net down for a draught.” Simon Peter hesitated a bit but he obeyed. The response was a great catch of fish, so many that the net broke. He was wonderfully astonished at what happened when he obeyed Jesus Christ. It was the challenge of the deep to him. Simon learned that he need not be afraid to go out into the deep when Jesus commands and accompanies him. But long, long before this, one of God’s greatest noblemen learned the same lesson. God told him to get out of the shallow waters of heathendom and to plunge into the depths of the great religion of the true and living God. And like Simon Peter he also obeyed. And O, what wonderful results followed. God asked Abram to do a hard thing. It was to separate himself from his native land, his father’s house and to sever the friendships of a life time growth. He told him to go to a land which He would show him. He told him that He would make him a great nation, that He would bless him and make his name great. He said, “I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curses thee and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” Abram obeyed the call of God. He came to Palestine. God appeared unto him there. And He erected an altar unto God and called upon His Holy name. Later on a famine came into that land. Abraham distrusted God. He went down into Egypt where he fell

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into sin. Then after a time he returned to the land of Palestine. He came to the place of the altar and called upon God. And God spoke to him again.

1. We note how God finds men whom He wants in His service. God looks in unexpected places and selects very unlikely men to do His great work. The stuttering Moses, Amos the plowman, the shepherd David, the uncouth fisherman, Paul the persecutor, Lincoln the back woodsman, Carey the shoemaker, Luther, the miner's son, Abraham the son of an idolator. But there was a reason for calling these men as leaders in the great work of the Lord. These men had sparks in their souls that made it possible for God to strike His flint and kindle a flame. Some of the image and likeness of God are still there. There was a creative energy, a power to love and a passion to save. There was something in their lives which was recognized by Jehovah as of great worth in His service. To this something He would attach His infinite power. They had it in them to do something for God and the world. And they like iron filings were attracted to the magnetism of the spiritual.

2. God placed in this man's soul a great spiritual passion. There are two manifestations of human nature. One shows us to be in love with rest; the other shows us to be in love with motion. The one is backward looking toward experience, the other forward looking towards hopes. The one cautious, conservative; the other adventurous and radical. Caution lies forever amid the shadows, unblessing and unblest. Faith, with obedience and enterprise dares the unfathomable deep and reaps rich rewards. The soul of Abraham was connected with a Divine current that made him restless. So he followed a hope. "Going out not knowing whither he

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went.” It was the call of the Spirit of God to his spirit. God placed in his soul a spiritual passion which caused him to separate from friends and wealth and land to follow that passion. The story is told of a lion cub that was reared with a flock of sheep. It seemed perfectly content to live with the sheep. They wandered at times far off into the native wild environment far from the sheltering fold, but the lion always came back with the sheep at eventime. But one day while out in the fields, he heard the roar of an old lion away off in the wilderness. He stopped and listened and with a mighty bound of terrific fierceness he abandoned the peaceful flock of sheep and with burning eyes joined himself to the lion. He heard the roar and it aroused all his primitive instincts. He responded to it. So did this deeply spiritual man respond to the spiritual call of God. The roar of the lion was irresistible. The call of God is also irresistible. Hear Jesus say to Phillip, “Follow Me.” He calls. His own hear His voice and follow where He leads.

3. Abraham pursuing his soul passion. This God planted passion in his soul made Abraham so eager, so restless, so forward looking that he forsook his country, his relatives, his friends, his moorings and followed it. He truly launched out into the deep. He went into an unchartered world. He knew not where he was going but God knew. He was just trusting in God. God told him that He would make him a great nation and a great blessing and Abraham believed Him, though he did not thoroughly understand it all. This was his dynamic. This was his driving power. His face was fixed towards life’s summit. He was happy in his great anticipation.

The pursuit of his passion led him to the land of Palestine. Here at Bethel, he erected an altar un-

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to God. The altar is a meeting place between God and man. Here he would call upon God and God would speak unto him. In this way his passion for God would be kept aflame. The Lord appeared frequently here. And wherever he went, he erected an altar unto the living God and worshipped Him.

But there seemed to be one blot on the escutcheon. One spot on his sun, one weak link in his chain, one shadow on his soul, a bit of dross in his gold. Wealth, comfort, material satisfaction, or greatness appeared to obscure his real objective. But the passion which God placed in his soul was not for wealth, flocks, herds, or children. So he had to be disillusioned. And that is always hard. So there were many trying experiences which came to him in Palestine. God had spoken about an inheritance for himself and his children. He never got it. The only land he ever owned was where he buried Sarah, his wife. Even the son was long delayed. He had a hard time of it with the inhabitants of that land—his neighbors. He had to give up many things. Then the famine came. This was the crisis. This was the dividing of the ways. Now the man will be tested. Which shall dominate the material or the spiritual? Will he stay where God has placed him, or will he go where he need not suffer without God? O, the anxiety of it all. He is now out in God's great deep. Will he stay there amid danger, toil and sacrifice? No, he seeks the shallow waters of ease, comfort and safety.

4. Abram goes away from the altar. Here we see the humanity of the man. Here we see his free moral agency. God has honored him with power of choice in all these matters. He abandons his passion. The spiritual back ground of his life almost disappears. He chooses material things instead of

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spiritual. He goes into Egypt where he can have plenty to eat and gain more wealth. It is the old story of Esau selling his birthright for a mess of pottage. Esau had a good precedent for his sale. It is just like David killing a man that he might have the man's wife to satisfy his passion for lust. He abandons the altar and turns his back on God.

He went into Egypt. While he is down there, we have no record of him erecting altars, or calling upon God. Nor have we any record of God speaking to him. But we do have the record that he fell grievously into sin. He told lies and he made money. He got very rich. He was pursuing the wrong passion and he was using the power which God gave him in pursuing this wrong passion. He was misappropriating divine power and genius. God gave him power but he was using that power for himself and not for God. After awhile Pharaoh kicked him out of Egypt and compelled him to return home. "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform." God used Pharaoh to set Abram right.

5. Abram comes back to the Altar. "And Abram went up out of Egypt unto the place of the altar, even unto Bethel." He came back to the place where he had at the first called upon God. He had to begin all over again. There he called upon God. There God spoke to him again. There he found the lost chord. There at the altar he found his passion for God. After twenty-five years of unattainment and more or less misunderstanding, the Lord spoke to him and said, "Do not be afraid Abraham, I am thy exceeding great reward—not flocks, not herds, not land, not children, but I am thy exceeding great reward. It is a spiritual and not a material conquest to which I have called you." And again he believed God. He found that he could live, and desire, and

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aspire after things which could not be bought and sold. A heavenly discovery. Now the man realizes what God wants him to do. He has at last found the meaning of God's call, and the longings of his soul.

He was content to be a pilgrim and a stranger all the rest of his days in a land which had been promised to him as an inheritance. He had now learned to look for a city whose Maker and Builder is God. He is a different man now. See him so graciously practicing the presence of God in his life in his dealings with Lot. See him willing to offer Isaac on the Altar. Yes, he came back to the Altar. Once more the passion of God burned in his soul.

Can it be that we have lost our passion for souls? Has that divinely given passion been submerged in the ocean of materialism? Have we got a vision of men and women saved? Have we got a vision of them even seeking salvation? Don't let us be discouraged. Here at the Altar of God, let us hear the call, renew our vision, rekindle our passion, and go on for God. Abraham never went away from the Altar again. Once was enough for him. God kept him faithful until his bones were laid by the side of Sarah in the cave of Machpelah. Christ calls to-night. If away from the Altar will you not return? Come on back from Egypt. Come back, even unto Bethel where you used to get your inspiration. Let us go away from this Altar this night with our hearts all aflame for God and for the souls of men.

Conviction

Why Doesn't God Kill the Devil?

Text.—“And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.”—Jude 6.

AS AN approach to this subject I want to state a number of well known and indisputable facts concerning spiritual fundamentals.

a. God is. This is the first teaching concerning our Holy Religion. We cannot get any where until we believe that God exists. He not only exists but He is the Creator of the world, of man, of heaven and of the angels. God Himself is a Spirit uncreated and perfect. Man is a created spirit, able to know, to feel and to will. His body was made of the dust of the earth and his spirit came from God Who breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul. The angels are created spirits and differ from men only that they dwell not on the earth and have not bodies made of flesh hence do not have human limitations. It is God's will that both angels and man shall worship Him and fulfill His commands and abide with Him forever.

b. The Devil is. There is no question of the reality of the existence of the devil. And there is no question about his personality. He appears to be a fallen angel, and yet angels must have been tested like men for “God spared not the angels that sinned but cast them down to hell and delivered them into

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chains of darkness to be reserved unto the judgment." Not only were they tested but the Word of God says some of them fell. But the fallen angels do not seem to have another chance as man has. On this point we have no revelation, nor need it concern us. The devil is condemned to eternal banishment from the presence of God. He represents all the powers of evil in this world. His known purpose is to oppose the will of God and to tempt men to evil.

c. The destiny of men and angels. Both were created free moral agents with the ability to know, to feel and to will. The power to love, to hate, to think and to act was given to both. Thus were rested upon them moral and spiritual responsibility. The men who choose Jesus Christ as their Lord and Master have eternal life as their destiny. (Greek word is "aionion zoan"). The same would be true of the angels. The men who choose the devil for their master have for their destiny everlasting punishment. ("aionion kolasin") Same is true of the angels again. I want you to note that if there is no eternal punishment there is no eternal life, for the same words are used to qualify both life and punishment. Here is an unanswerable argument for those who are deceived by the teaching of the annihilation of the wicked.

d. The Fall of man. In the fall, man yielded to the temptation of the devil, distrusted and disobeyed God, but he trusted and obeyed the devil. He chose the devil rather than God for his master of his own free will. Since that time the devil has been so successful in deceiving men that he is called by our Saviour the prince of this world. He has got such a following here among men, who obey and trust him that they constitute an organization of such formidable power that it is called a kingdom.

WHY DOESN'T GOD KILL THE DEVIL?

In fact by that first act of deception and the voluntary yielding on the part of our first parents in the Garden of Eden the flood gates were opened and the devil entered into our race bringing sin and death. "For by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin." And now our natural state is one of sin and misery. There is an inborn depravity due to his influence which renders us unable to do good and inclines us to do evil. "I find then a law, when I would do good, evil is present with me, The good that I would I do not, and the evil that I would not do, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." There are three things which convince us on this point. They are the holy commandments of God, our own conscience, and the lives of regenerated men.

e. God's Call to men. Man went away from God through the gate way of disobedience, mistrust and unbelief. God has been calling him to come back home. But he must come back through the gates by which he went out and the sign on the outside reads obedience, belief and trust. God says, "Obey." Satan says, "Disobey." Thus the battle is waged in the soul of man. The other night we spoke of Christ coming into the world, entering into the stronghold of satan, binding him and taking his spoils, and offering man a chance to step out into freedom. Now tonight we want to tell you why He didn't kill him when He had him bound. The question is a very practical one. You are interested in it or there would not be such a large crowd here. If the devil is the cause of all our sin, and misery and final separation from God, why doesn't God kill him and save us all this trouble? At first thought we might say, "Christ ought to have killed him." We think we would have done so to such an arch enemy

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to the race. Historical facts let some light in on this killing business. Kings used to do that in order to eliminate enemies. But it never worked very satisfactory. So here there are reasons why God does not kill the devil.

1. The Reasons:

a. Because God is able to save us from the devil's power. There is a greater manifestation of Grace in saving from the enemy than in killing the enemy. Greater mercy is shown here and greater love.

b. Because God has created us free moral beings and we must therefore have a choice in the selection of our master. An idiot cannot choose. God has not made us idiots but thinking, responsible men. It is a compliment to man that God trusts him to choose his destiny. The race is honored and dignified. It shows faith in us. It shows love for us. Would you like to have the power of choice removed? That would rob you of your manhood, wouldn't it? That is what would happen if God killed the devil.

c. Because God would have to create another devil to take his place. The moral universe demands an opposite to the good. That is evil. We have light and we have its opposite, darkness. We have heaven and we have its opposite, hell. If there is reward for good there must also be punishment for evil. Satan involves not only the reality of the existence of evil but its culmination as well. We find in our courts and jails, and penal institutions the reason for the existence of a place of punishment. Hell is the penitentiary of the universe.

d. Because the devil is a spirit and spirits cannot be destroyed.

e. Because the devil is reserved for eternal punishment.

WHY DOESN'T GOD KILL THE DEVIL?

2. God does not kill but only binds the devil. But binding is equivalent to killing for the man who steps out on the side of Christ. God makes it possible for him to escape, to be free. That is all a man can ask—just a chance to be free. What more can a healthy red-blooded man ask than just such a chance? Is it not enough in other spheres of life just to have a chance, to get an education, to have health, a job, wealth, happiness, a home? Then it is up to us to make good. You admire the man who takes his chance and makes good. You despise the man who refuses to take his chance and fails.

3. God's great act of mercy is here revealed. God has done His part. Jesus came to us and bound the strong one. Now we must prove our manhood. It will now appear if there is really any thing in us worth while. Now we must act. We must choose and determine our own fate. Remember it is not the will of God that any one should perish. He has gone as far as He can with us without robbing us of our manhood. He has opened the door and pointed the way. He has struck the shackles from us. The door of the prison house is open. What is the sensible thing to do? Will you step out in the liberty of the people of God? Will you do it now? Will you take the first step tonight? All you need is to desire the better life, then summon your courage and will power, let Jesus take you by the hand and lead you out. Come now, let us settle this matter tonight. You have had enough of satan. We are not asking you to go all the way tonight, but just to look where freedom is. Just to take the first step. Then we want you to look about you for awhile to get adjusted to your new Master and your freedom. Then we want you to help these meetings by getting your friends to come here and catch your vision.

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That is why we are asking you to take instruction for five or six nights and complete your work at Easter. This is only fair to you and the church.

The Greatest Sin in Princeton

Text.—“And Gallio cared for none of those things.”

—Acts 18:17.

WE SEE what we are looking for in this world. We get just about what we want, and we become very like the persons or things which we think most about. A young preacher on the eve of his ordination was walking down the streets of Williamsport, Pa., with a man and his wife. The man was an admirer of automobiles, the lady was interested in flowers and the preacher was not yet married. The man said, “Isn’t that a wonderful car over there?” The lady said, “Did you ever see such beautiful flowers as those in yonder garden?” and the young preacher said, “Do you see that charming young maid sitting on that wide veranda?” Each saw what they were looking for. Two young men came into the city of Scranton, Pa. for their first trip. They walked down the street together. One of them saw a dude with a cane, a monocle, a silk hat and a cigarette. He thought in his heart I would like to be like that. The other one saw a neat little home with a beautiful young mother sitting on the porch cooing to a young child. He said, “that is what I want some day.” Time passed and the one became a dude and the other had his cozy home with the wife and baby too. They got exactly what they wanted. It was said of Michael Angelo that when he produced his masterpiece of sculpture, “David”, the change which took place in the artist’s face startled even his friends. He became so much like the thing he thought so much about.

A good marksman hits the thing he aims at. A

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boy went with his father to hunt quail. He shot several times and got none. His father brought one down every time he shot. The boy thought there was something wrong with his gun. He exchanged with his father but the results were the same. Then the father asked him how he was doing it. He replied, "When they fly up, I try to shoot the whole covey." The father directed him to single out one of the flock and aim at it. Then he succeeded in bagging several. The same thing is true in seeking a wife. You get along better when you select one and concentrate on that one. It is true when great battles are to be fought. The campaign always has an objective point. And it is equally true in fighting sin. We show wisdom when we single out the sin and attack it vehemently. All sin is terrible, but there are some sins which are deadlier than others. If these are met and dealt with so that they are utterly driven from our lives, the lesser ones will often go with them. We want to locate the position of the strongest forces of satan and hurl our united force against them. We want to learn the sins which he is using most effectively to destroy life and then attack them and counter attack them until their power and influence is destroyed. To this end we must locate, and recognize the sin and strike hard with the help of Jesus Christ. Sin is every thing contrary to the will of God. There are sins of commission and sins of omission. The things which we have not done which God made it possible for us to do will condemn us as well as the things we have done which God tells us not to do. God remembers the sin. He never forgets. It is always present with Him. Man may forget it, but God never forgets it until it is washed away by the blood of Christ. Then He remembers it no more. That sin of yours may

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have been committed twenty-five years ago. You have forgotten it probably. You think other folks have anyway. But I tell you this night God still remembers that sin. It has been getting bigger and bigger all the time like the ever widening circle in the pond. But God through Jesus Christ is willing to pardon the sin and He is able to blot it out forever. So we must concern ourselves about our sins. And we want to attack the greatest ones first.

The greatest sin in the world is unbelief. That is to refuse to accept Jesus Christ as the Redeemer and Saviour. Being the greatest sin there follows in its trail the greatest penalty—eternal banishment from the presence of God. “He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.” All our sins come from this greatest sin. You may call the awful roll from infanticide to Deicide and they all originate in unbelief. But I want to speak tonight not so much about the greatest sin of the world as about the greatest sin in Princeton. And yet we must know what the greatest sin in the world is and be able to meet it or we can’t meet the greatest sin in Princeton.

1. The greatest sin in Princeton. I am using this term so as to direct your attention to a sinful condition which obtains so very generally in our city and community that it must be removed before we can hope to accomplish anything for the cause of Christ.

a. It is not taking the Name of God in vain. Though that is a great and common enough sin. God has forbidden it. “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord Thy God in vain.” God remembers every oath. Why should men swear? They might offer at least a poor excuse for lying or stealing but none for swearing. This is sin but not our greatest.

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b. It is not gambling. Though here is a sin, indeed. And there is far too much of it. It saps the red corpuscle and iron from men's blood. Removes from men their hard earned money and often leaves innocent ones to suffer. Takes away the principle of self reliance. Leaves a desire to get something for nothing, teaches shiftlessness. Don't try to get your neighbor's money without value received. Be fair. Go out and dig in the ditch if need be. Get honest wages. Honor that part of your life which you spend for money.

c. It is not the desecration of the Lord's Day. This is pretty common sin in our city. It is forbidden by God. "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it Holy." It is God's day. A holy day. It is not yours. You have no right to use it as you please unless you please to use it for the glory of God.

d. It is not intemperance. This sin has left an awful trail of blood and crime in its train. The flood gates have been closed but the battle is not all over. Wife and family are still suffering. Souls are still being lost through it.

e. It is not the social evil. God only knows how black and treacherous this sin is. How it is ruining and blasting forever the lives of young men and women.

THE GREATEST SIN IN PRINCETON IS INDIFFERENCE TO SPIRITUAL REALITIES. It is unconcern, carelessness, lack of interest and anxiety in God and in the welfare of souls. This stupefying lethargy caused by satanic presence and influence results in soul destroying sin, of which the victim oft times is wholly unconscious. And what is still worse he refuses to accept the diagnosis of the expert Physician.

a. The Scripture declaration. "In as much as

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ye did it not," says Jesus. They had the opportunity. They could have done it. They would not. "They began with one consent to make excuse." They were invited. They could have come. They would not. "Gallio cared for none of those things." He would not. Jerusalem could have been gathered but she would not. These people could have given bread to the hungry, they could have come to the wedding feast, Gallio could have cared, but they would not. They believed but they were indifferent. They had no interest. They were not concerned. The thing did not seem as important to them as some other things which were before them at that time. Some one says, "I never thought of indifference being the greatest sin in Princeton." Another says, "I never thought of it being a sin at all." Ah! How very subtle has been this device of satan. That is what he wants to do. He wants us to have a sin, a damning sin in our midst which we do not recognize as a sin at all.

b. Let the church speak. Why are you not more active in the service of the church. The final answer will always come back, "Because of indifference." O, I know many try to evade the real cause by giving other excuses, just like those people the Bible told us about. They tell us, "We are too busy. (But we always have plenty of time to do the things we want to do). We don't like the preacher. There are too many hypocrites in the church. But the real reason is because they are indifferent. Why don't people who believe step out on the side of Christ and help win others to Him? I know the reason. You wiggle and twist and make excuse after excuse, but when you face the facts you will admit your real and only reason is that **YOU DO NOT CARE.**

c. In other spheres than the church. Apply this

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same principle to your business, your lodge, your home. It gets the same results. Indifference will kill any organization. Better a thousand times have the most bitter opposition than indifference. It deadens the conscience. The best way to kill any movement is to ignore it. How about it, boys? A love wave is started and she ignores and shuns you. The thing that keeps any movement alive is interest—either favorable or unfavorable. Sometimes the people who knock the preacher and the church help the church far more than if they tried to help.

2. What is the cause of Indifference? There are probably three things which contribute to this condition.

a. Indifference is a stupefying faction sent direct from satan and injected into the lives of men to keep them from being susceptible to the call of conscience and of God to the great spiritual realities. It is an hyperdermic injection of a serum of sin which causes an unconscious condition of soul regarding sin and its effects so that just like going under the influence of opium there are delightful sensations soon to be followed by harmful results.

b. Materialistic views of life cause indifference. Men will so absorb this sort of stuff until they lose their sensitiveness of perception regarding the deeper spiritual things.

c. Continued indulgence in the practice of mild sins will soon lead to indifference.

3. What is the remedy for Indifference?

a. There must first be an interest awakened in the welfare of the soul and in other souls. There must be personal concern. Each one must realize that his life is of value. It is too precious to be ruined by neglect. If we are worth enough to bring Jesus Christ from Heaven to earth to seek us and

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to die for us, we ought to care what happens to us. To know the real value of a soul and its enemies and its dangers should help to get rid of Indifference.

b. There must be a deep conviction of sin. We must see sin as a fact. A calamitous fact. A personal fact. We must realize that we are sinners and admit it.

c. To get rid of Indifference we must see our lives in the light of Calvary.

d. We must see our need of a Savior. Jesus is that Savior. When we will allow Him to come into our lives, we will have the remedy. Jesus is the remedy and the only remedy for this sin. "There is none other name under Heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

Easy Religion

Text.—“Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, it is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.”—1 Kings 12:28.

JEROBOAM would be popular to day. There are lots of folks who are ready for such religious food as he offered to his people. Such words as toil, exertion, labor, struggle, travail, suffer, sacrifice and responsibility—these sterner words and all that they stand for—are fast losing their popularity among folks. They are calling and clamoring with considerable emphasis for softer words such as rest, ease, repose, quiet, comfort, retirement, content, enjoyment—these words and what they mean are the popular words. In every walk of life there seems to be a tendency to find and to adopt the easy ways of doing things. Easy methods are much in demand. We note the easy methods of modern transportation, the easy methods of labor. The work of the farm, the office, the home is vastly easier than it was a generation ago. We are thankful that it is. That is a blessing from God. We note there are easy methods of earning a living. We are perfectly willing to allow somebody else do the job that requires hard work. We will look for the soft snap. There are easy methods of learning. We read in the magazines how you can get a four year high school course in two years. Learn nursing at home. Easy ways of getting wealth are advertised. And there are easy methods announced for getting back lost health. And when it comes to entertainment, the easy method is very prominent. Here we are offered our choice, victrola, moving picture, or radio. So we are not at all sur-

prised to hear of easy religion. Folks are caught in the grip of softness. They seem to ignore entirely the teaching of God's word. In 1 Cor. 6:9 Paul says: "The effeminate shall not inherit the kingdom of God." The word used is "Malakos" and means soft. It probably refers to people who are given to soft, easy, and luxuriant living. The people who refuse to endure hardship and decline to bear a cross, who always want to lie on feathers. They want to "be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease, while others fight to win the prize and sail through bloody seas." This easy religion is not new. It is as old as the tower of Babel. Away back there they tried to find an easy way to heaven. They tried to find an easy way to safety and protection.

1. Jeroboam's "Golden Calves." The ten tribes went out on a strike. They followed a spirited leader. They went out from Rehoboam and declared their allegiance to Jeroboam. This man had genius. He was a constructor. He built a great city—the city of Schechem in Mt. Ephraim and he dwelt therein. But in doing all this and asking the people to come along and to remain with him he severed many ties of sacred relationship. Foremost among which was the religious tie. These people had a spiritual background which was not easy to obliterate. This king was wise enough to detect this. He was conscious of the strong religious tug in the peoples' lives. He knew how they would obey the impulse to return sooner or later. And he knew that if they returned to worship they would stay there. They would unite themselves with Rehoboam and probably return and kill him. So he talked this thing over. He took counsel. He studied the situation and this was his conclusion. He would feed their religious desire with a substitute.

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a. He would set up the golden calves in their midst. He would make them easy of access. He would appeal to a very sensitive weakness in them as well as in most men. He would say, "Now you people work so hard and are so busy all the time. It is too much for you to spend the time, money, and energy to go up to Jerusalem. Of course it is nice to go. And it would be all right to go up some time. But out of our love for you and our concern for your spiritual interests we will have a worship of our own right here at home." He was a pretty wise man. He understood human nature. He knew the necessity of religion to make people good and contented citizens far better than some of our modern statesmen do. So up went the calves, one in Bethel, the other in Dan.

b. He would make an order of priests. The people would at once ask for the priest. "We will take care of that all right." Now how did he meet this need? "He made priests of the lowest of the people which were not of the sons of Levi." Why did he take such people? Well, the better people would not do such religious things.

c. He ordained a feast. He knew the people would demand it. He wanted to fix it all up as well as he could. So he made the feast, like the one in Judah. He had an altar. He offered sacrifice. He copied every thing after the real religion. He did just like our modern heretics do. Here is a good illustration of easy religion. Here is a good attempt to imitate religion. A substitute and a counterfeit religion but it merits just one comment. "He made Israel to sin." What an indictment!

2. Some Pulpits are encouraging Easy Religion. There are many preachers in our pulpits in this age who differ little from the ideals of Jeroboam.

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a. Preachers are substituting a social gospel for the genuine Gospel of Christ. They are saying that what people need is not religion so much as a better environment. Give them parks, playgrounds, more money, better homes and they will develop into better characters. They say just educate them. Scientific culture will do the job. Self improvement is salvation. All this is but offering stones for bread. It is setting up the calves all over again. The people need to go to Jerusalem. They need the old fashioned Gospel of Jesus Christ.

b. Preachers are using sensational subjects to lure the people to their pews. Topics of the day are announced as themes. Literary and scientific treatises are offered as substitutes for Gospel sermons. When we were in San Francisco a few years ago, a noted preacher announced that on Sunday he would preach on the subject, "When you were a tadpole and I was a fish." Just Jeroboam's Calves.

c. Imitating the amusement world. There are many modern churches which are imitating the amusement world. They introduce all kinds of entertaining specialities even at the sacred hours of worship. Moving pictures, and clownish performances are used to compete with the amusement places. Easy religion again. Up-to-date calves.

d. Winking at the sins of Society. Many of the common sins of modern society are passed by unnoticed from our pulpits because prominent people indulge in them. If they were denounced the people would not attend the church services. So in order to ease their consciences these sins are winked at. Just imitation preaching. That is all.

3. Many Pews are demanding Easy Religion. We are not going to lay all the blame on the preachers. For people get about what they want in this

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world. And they get about the kind of preaching they are willing to listen to in a great many cases. If they want the good old Gospel and will come out to hear it, most preachers will give it to them. But if they will not come to hear the Gospel in its purity at least some preachers will give them the thing that will give them an audience. Just be sure of that.

a. Church is just a part of the social life. For some church members that is about all it means. They come to show their nice clothes or their artificial "make ups", to satisfy their wunderlust, or to gossip a bit. These people want a very mild and much diluted gospel, and they want it in their midst, not up in Jerusalem.

b. Sinful members. Some church members are living in open sin. They do not want these sins denounced, for they love them. They are their pets. If the preacher insist that these sins shall be abandoned and the sinners repent and seek forgiveness and go and do these things no more; they resent it all. They want a double standard of life. They like that sort of thing. This Bible kind of morality and religion was all right for their mothers but it is entirely too slow for them.

c. Lots of our members want to be Christians without Christ. Some folks want to be Christians without even uniting with the church. They want to avoid all criticism and responsibility. They live on the fence so they can get with either crowd that comes along. Church tramps who will not tie up to any church. There are a few of that kind in our town. I have met them. Easy religion is their hobby.

d. Members but not workers. Some like to belong to a church but do not want to work in any of

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the departments of the church. Just want to sit. It would be all right if they would sit where the preacher wants them to sit but they will not even do that. These church members who are demanding easy religion are just like the preachers who offer an easy religion; they cause Israel to sin.

4. People are practicing Easy Religion. Here we see easy religion in its actual working out.

a. In the home. The line of least resistance is followed in far too many of our American homes. Let us open many of our homes and what do we see? No family altar, no blessing at the table, no Bible study. We ask why these practices of religious nurture have been discontinued. The answer is, "It is too hard to keep them up. We simply cannot adjust our modern home to these things." What they really mean is that they are practicing an easy religion.

b. Church attendance. There are many church members who find regular attendance upon Divine worship a difficult task. So they come only occasionally. They want to belong to the church but do not want to give much time to it. The same thing is true of money and energy.

c. Fraternal organizations. These claim many of our church members. They are easy religions. Many folks use them for substitutes for the church. So the people go to Bethel and to Dan for it is easier than to go to Jerusalem. They accept the substitute.

5. The Devil offers Easy Religions. He is a past master in this art.

a. There is Christian Science, Russelism, Unitarianism, Universalism, New Thought and what not? These are calves which he sets up and says to folks. "It is too hard for you to hold the old fashioned faith. Here are your gods. Worship them." He very cunningly sets forth counterfeits of the true religion.

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He imitates the services as really as Jeroboam did.

b. People who are not warmly attached to the Church of the living God become fruitful soil for easy religions. But those who are all aflame in their zeal for God are secure. A fly doesn't light on a hot stove.

6. Jesus Rebuked Easy Religion. In a most wonderful way He tore Himself from the grip of softness and endured hardness as a good soldier.

a. He chose the way of the cross. By His own life HE is an example for us. He was thrice tempted to take some other way. But no, Calvary was His destination. No easy religion for Him.

b. He said, "Deny thyself, take up thy cross and follow Me." Nothing easy about those requirements.

c. He never compromised in regard to doctrines. He never said to the moral leper, "If you don't like the doctrine about hell, I will take it away."

d. The early followers of Jesus didn't know any easy religion. Peter, Paul and the others. Only hardness can make great souls like them.

e. Easy Religion fails. It cannot connect men and women with the real springs of power. No man was ever made strong against non-resistance. The oak tree is our example. See old Gideon as he cries, "Give me my mountain." Christianity is not a single experience. It is a Way, a Life, a Warfare. It is a hard way. It takes strength. The man who swears, drinks or lies and quits it all must needs be strong. The man who is tempted and does not yield is strong. Easy religion does not give him that strength. Any fool can follow an easy religion but it takes all the strength of the strongest man plus the strength of Christ to follow the true religion of the Son of God. It takes strength and courage and resolution to fol-

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low the way of Christ. The Gospel calls are to hardship, sacrifice and battle. Christ calls us to campaign, not to comfort. It requires strong characters to follow Christ. It has always been that way. The soft soon fall away. Christ calls to us to follow Him "through peril, toil and pain." Let us all answer that call by saying, "Lord, Jesus, we are ready for service."

The Call of the Unsaved

Text.—“Come over into Macedonia and help us.”—Acts 16:9.

THIS TEXT is a bit of the experience of the great Apostle to the gentiles. This man was called of God to do a specific work in the Kingdom. And O, the romance of that life. How our emotions are stirred as we follow him along his eventful way. He was to carry the Gospel to those who were outside of the Jewish nation. And He carried it with enthusiasm. He went as it like a man who was looking for lost souls. He worked just as hard for souls as some folks do for dollars, or fame. He was driven by that restlessness which is characteristic of fully consecrated souls. The Spirit of God was in him. He had a passion for saving the lost which was akin to the Master for Whose sake he gave all his mind, all his heart and all his strength and all his soul. Paul was active. Paul's activity was constructive in the Kingdom of God. Paul preserved the results of his activity through the help of Christ. He was no barren fig tree. He was no idler in the vineyard. He never sold his birthright. He invested it in soul winning bonds under the direction of Jesus Christ. He was a veritable whirlwind for God. When he struck a town and turned the Gospel light on men's lives, it was just like lifting a stone which had lain for a long time undisturbed and letting the sunlight in—all kinds of ugly worms, bugs, and other creeping and crawling things scampered away seeking some other shelter in the darkness of seclusion. Wicked men trembled when Paul approached. Paul is now making a visit to establish churches in the faith. He is now preserving the results of his con-

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structive activity. He is also increasing the number of Christians daily. He is putting on a great soul-winning mission. They had finished their work in Phrygia and Galatia. Then he wanted to go to Asia. But God said, "No, I don't want you to go there." Then they came to Mysia and they wanted to go to Bythinia. But the Spirit said, "No," again. Then they came to Troas. And here Paul saw a vision in the night. Some people are all the time working where God does not want them to work. Even Paul had to take his orders from the Holy Spirit. In this vision, there stood a man of Macedonia and he prayed him that he would come over into Macedonia and help them. After Paul saw that vision, they endeavored to go into Macedonia assuredly believing that the Lord had called them to preach the Gospel there. They saw the vision first and then they went to work.

1. God's work. One of the first things that we must learn is that saving souls is God's work, winning souls is God's work. We must wait for our orders from Him. If we place ourselves under the direction of the Holy Spirit, He will indicate our fields of service. He will send us to the people whom He has prepared for us to lead to Christ. God wisely plans the campaign. We need lots of conferences with God on our knees in our closets before we have conferences with men in the offices and on the street. That is the secret of soul-winning. Some never wait for God to prepare the way and they always fail. There is a Macedonia for us when there is not an Asia or a Bythinia. But some will insist on working in Asia in spite of the Spirit's objections.

2. The Call of the Unsaved. I believe God wants every Christian to be a soul winner. I believe there is some one calling to every one of us. I believe

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these calling ones are in our own community, in our homes and not in some far off land. I believe they can only be seen from God's view point and if we get close enough to Him we can see them too as He does. At the cross, we can get a vision of the unsaved who want to be saved and who want us to lead them to God. If we go to the right people, God being with us we can lead those people to Him. If we go to the wrong people we must fail. It is therefore very important that we wait on the leadership of the Lord.

Every unsaved person is calling to Christians to come and help them. I know it does not appear so. There is every appearance of indifference. "How many of you men are married? Let me see your hands. You don't need to be ashamed of it. Do you remember the night you proposed marriage to that young lady? You were a bit nervous I think. Do you remember how very indifferent she acted? Hasn't she told since that she was just dying to have you ask her, afraid all the time that you were not going to do it?" Every normal girl expects somebody to propose marriage to her at some time, "Don't you, girls?" You understand me, I am sure. And do not be discouraged about the apparent indifference. A lady asked me the other night if I thought there was any use in trying to get a certain man into the church. I said, "Why not, he is human?" You might just as well have a young man say, "Do you think there is any use in asking this young girl to marry me?" Why not? She is human. But I never would advise a man to ask a girl that question unless he means it. She might accept you. So it is with asking folks to come to Christ. Mean it. A boy heard his mother calling a number of times, finally he said, "Mother, do you want me, or were you just

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hollering?" The unsaved are asking the same question. Do we mean it or are we just hollering? There are two kinds of calls which come from the unsaved:

a. The Unconscious Call. This call from Macedonia was an unconscious call. There was no committee waiting to receive Paul when he landed on their coast. No, there was a jail waiting for him. Their need was the call. My brother was driving one dark night in his Ford. By a mistake, because of the dimness of the lights, he followed a road that led to a stone quarry instead of the main road. Soon he would have plunged over an embankment of more than twenty feet when a man who could hardly speak a word of English called loudly and waved a lantern frantically. He stopped the car within a few feet of the edge of the quarry. He did not know his danger. His call for help was his need of help. It was an unconscious call. The same thing is true of a person who ignorantly is about to drink a deadly draught of poison, or the youth about to take his first plunge into sin. These are the unconscious calls.

b. The Conscious Call. Many know the right and desire to do it. But they are often bound by the fetters of habit, heredity and environment and sin. They cannot do the good which they would do. And they do the evil which they would not do. Like the jailor, they cry, "What must I do to be saved?" or like the Greeks, "Sirs, we would see Jesus," or like Peter, "Lord, save or I perish."

3. What is the content of this call? They are asking for two things:

a. Personality. They want some strong one to stand by them. It is, "You come, not you send. Come in person. We want you." They have the same need as we have. We needed Jesus to come in person.

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They don't want sermons. They don't want reproof. They want a sympathetic, helpful personality. They are weak, they need strength. It is Jesus in our lives Who gives us strength. "Lo I am with you always." That is what the unsaved are calling for.

b. Help. They want help. They do not want it all done for them but they do want and need some help. They need it for just awhile. For at first the unsaved are as helpless as new born babes. But there comes a time when the babe must feed himself, walk alone, run about, and provide his own way. That is what I like about this plan of evangelism. We are not making the decision for folks. We are just helping a bit. We are giving every interested one time and opportunity to think this thing through for himself. We are not trying to cram our faith down your throats. We want you to investigate Christianity and if you are satisfied that it is the thing you need and want, then accept it. But some one says, "Is it not the Word rather than the person that they are calling for and that they need?" Jesus became incarnate, so must we. We must be living epistles known and read of all men. The living Word is the personality of the child of God. The Word translated into personality. The Word must become flesh in us.

4. The answer to the call. How are we to answer this call? There are three ways.

a. We must first of all hear the call.

(1) See the vision in the unconscious call. Only a few see it. Paul was the only one here. Those who see the vision must act as leaders. There are only a few leaders. Only a few great reformers, only a few great statesmen, only a few great architects. There are lots of followers, lots of helpers.

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The leaders must lead and the helpers must be content to help.

(2) Hear the cry of the conscious call. Listen for it. Sometimes we don't hear because we do not want to hear.

b. Go to them as Christ came to the world, as Christian men and women have to come to us. We must believe in people. We must picture the unsaved as coming out to the altar and confessing Christ. Until you can visualize them as saved you will not accomplish much. So long as you think they will not come, so long as you doubt, they will not come. But when your faith sees them at the altar, they will come. You don't try very hard to accomplish things which you believe are impossible for you to accomplish. But O, how you labor to do the thing which you believe is possible. It is possible for Jesus to save the unsaved.

c. Help them. Don't scold them, don't preach, don't advise,—just help. The drowning man don't need a lecture. He needs a rope or a boat. So it is with the unsaved. You can give him the message of instruction after his feet are on the solid ground, but get him out first. We can help them by the lives we live. By the way we do business, by the places we go and the things we say. A consistent Christian life is the very best help to offer. Show them how we meet temptation, show them how we walk with Christ amid the commonplace things of life. Truly the unsaved are calling to the Christians today, "Come and help us."

That Far Country

Text.—“He took his journey into a far country.”—Luke 15:13.

I AM going to tell you a very tender, human story tonight. It is a human story but there is something divine in it too. It is about a young man who went into a far country, remained there awhile, then came to himself and returned to his father and received restoration. This is one of the parables of Jesus and it unfolds the great heart of the Heavenly Father and reveals his most tender solicitude for the welfare of His wondering ones. It is a human story for it shows the tendency of every one to get away from restraint unless he is held in safety by the strong grip of the spiritual. It is divine for it holds out a hope for those who have made the sad journey and it is a strong warning to those who have never been in that far country to stay away from it. For the experience of this lad is the experience of every one who goes into the far country with this exception that not every one comes to himself and returns. Many never return. They die there. The way into the far country is plainly marked by the trail of ruined lives as the trail across the desert is marked by the bones of dead men.

1. A happy home. With our imagination we see in this study a happy family. All is sunshine and all is well. One son comes into the home. Then another. Thus is the happiness increased, for children are a blessing from the Lord. We can see them working together in the fields. We see the joy of the evenings together around the family table. But a cloud began to gather on the horizon of that sky. The younger son made strange friends. The folks

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were not very well pleased about it. But they were tolerant and hoped for the best. He visits dance halls and meets immoral men and women. He stays out late at night. It soon began to tell on him. It unfitted him for his work. He began to lose interest in the farm. The cloud was getting bigger and lower and darker. Then the tragedy was enacted. The tranquility of the home was broken. A crisis was apparent. The wisdom and judgment of the father was questioned. The young man took charge and issued orders to the father. He wanted to get away from home, away from restraint, away from the fellowship of the elder brother. He asked his father to divide the inheritance and to give him his portion. I don't believe the father wanted to do it. But at last he yielded.

2. Preparation for the journey. A short time passed. He gathered all together and took a journey. But I want you to notice that he was prepared to go even before he started. All was ready. The process of preparation had been going on for a long time. You always do the things which you are prepared to do. You always love the things which you are prepared to love. You always go to the place where you are prepared to go in life, yes and in death. Judas went to his own place. This young man had been playing with vice and then he learned to love vice. Vice and love cannot long remain in the same home.

“Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
To be hated is but to be seen;
But seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity and then embrace.”

He was ready to embrace the sinful life before he closed the door of his father's house and started on the way to the far country. The elder brother

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and the parents said to him over and over again:
"Refrain tonight, and that will lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence; the next more easy:

For use can almost change the stamp of destiny."

But he would have none of that. He was prepared for a journey and he was determined to take it. And take it he did.

3. That far country. Where did he go? He went to the place where he was prepared to go. He knew where he was going. He had made frequent excursions into it before. He went into a far country. The far country may not be so far away after all. It is a condition or a state of society rather than a geographical location. I am persuaded that it often lies close at hand. Just as the good country does. It is not necessary for a person to convert their possession literally into cash, pack a few belongings into a grip, and board an outgoing train to go into that far country. No, you can get there by auto. There are persons who get there who never saw a train. There are sons and daughters too who still eat at the father's table and who still expect their share of the inheritance and who are not feeding swine and who are not eating from the troughs of swine. **BUT THEY ARE IN THAT FAR COUNTRY.** Probably this very night there are some of our own dear young men and young women and maybe some not so young who have once been happy in Christ but who are now hastening into that far country in automobiles, on their feet in some dancing hall in a dizzy whirl of glee. The far country may not be so far away. Persons may slip into it very quickly. The far country is where there is no longer any restraint. Where the authority of God and parents is questioned. It is where the conscience is seared. It is anywhere, where they are drawn from God. Just as

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soon as we step into that place where we no longer respect law, authority, and God, we are in that far country.

4. In the Far Country. This young man at last lands in the far country. He was expected. There was a royal welcome awaiting him. The news had been broadcasted that the father had given him the portion of goods that was his inheritance. There was joy among the demons of hell and among their imps on earth upon his arrival. To ruin a young life is a fiendish glee for the inhabitants of the underworld. The devil held out a bait for him and he took it. He took it bait, and hook and all in his eagerness. In that far country he shot into popularity like a blazing sky rocket only to come down again like a hodful of mortar from the fourteenth floor of a skyscraper. He was ready for anything. Just like a lot of very smart young people today. When a bait is held out that is tempting they will take it like a fish. And when they are caught about all they do is wiggle and twist a bit like a fish and give up.

He had a good time for awhile. He soon tasted all the varieties of sin. He soon wasted his substance in riotous living. There was one good thing about it all and that was his daddy gave it all to him at once and when he had spent that he got no more. He was limited in that way. He soon came to the end of his rope. Then he had to stop. His parasitic friends deserted him then. That was one way to get rid of them. That was a good thing for him. A fool and his money are soon parted. That is a good thing too. It is a Providential thing. It is a good thing that not only money, but that energy and life also soon give way. He didn't last long and neither does a fly when it strikes a flame. The

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tragedy is that there is always some other fool to try the same stunt with the same results. None of these fools last long. God takes care of that. It certainly is a blessing that bad men and bad women soon have their careers ended. It limits their period to do evil.

Things got to going against him. He soon got in a pretty bad way. Famine came. He was in want. He had no friends now. He gave very freely unto others but now no one gives unto him. Now he must pay for what he gets. He has nothing with which to pay. So he gets nothing. He came to himself. He began to think. (If he had only done that in the first place. His hind sight was better than his foresight.) He made comparisons. He made another resolution. He determined to take another journey. This time he would arise and go back home. He would go back to the place where he failed. Now we begin to love him again.

5. He comes back. There is a road which runs parallel to the one which leads to the far country. This road leads back to the father's house. The lad decides to step over on the homeward road. That was a heroic step he took when he decided to return and face the issue among the home folks. We must admit that it took courage and will power. We admire him for that. There was something lovable about this wayward chap. There generally is about wayward fellows.

He was still a son. The father's heart still kept a flame of love burning and it sent its cheerful rays even to the dark heart in the far country. Some one still cared. Some one hoped he would come back. Some one still believed in him. As long as some one cares and loves there is hope. He came back. He was a different boy. He never wanted to see the far

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country again. He had seen enough. He was truly penitent. He was willing to take an inferior place. The father gave him a hearty welcome. We are all glad he got back. But there are lots of them who never come back. The only safety lies in prevention. Stay away from the far country. If you have fallen, arise and come back. Some one, like the anxious hearted father, who didn't want you to go away is waiting for your return. Then there will be joy in the presence of the angels of God.

Decision

Lest Satan Get an Advantage

Text.—“Lest Satan should get an advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.”—2 Corinthians 2:11.

THE PURPOSE of this sermon is stated in the first clause of the text, “Lest Satan should get an advantage of us,” and the reason we are anxious about this matter is because “We are not ignorant of his devices.” God in His mercy has revealed to us the program of the devil and the principles upon which his devices are founded that we may be protected. And it is surely a part of the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to expose the designs of the greatest enemy of the souls of men. You would find no fault with me if I informed you that your house was on fire, or that a burglar was about to enter your office, or if I warned you of an impending catastrophe in your life. So I take it that if I can show you beyond a reasonable doubt that an enemy is approaching your soul with the malignant purpose of blasting it for all eternity that you will at least give the matter serious and thoughtful consideration. I read a moment ago from the Word of God that the devil, who deceiveth the whole world, has been thrown out of heaven and cast upon the earth, and that he has come down unto you. Princeton is a very important part of this earth to us and so we have reason to consider his presence in our world, in our community with alarm.

1. Who is Satan? The Hebrew word is “Satan”

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and means adversary. The Greek word is "Diabolis" and means a slanderer. He is described in the Bible as "The Adversary." This is because he is animated with a disposition hostile to all goodness and the chief opponent of God and man. He aims to undo the work of God. He seeks to persuade men to sin. He desires to lead them to renounce God. He endeavors to prevent their acceptance by God. He is sometimes influential in bringing about physical sickness, pecuniary loss and even bereavement. He is, however, under the control of God. Only by God's permission can he pursue his malicious designs. He is the god of this world who has access to the hearts of men and deceives them and receives their witting or unwitting obedience. He is the ruler of an organized kingdom, having principalities, powers, and dominions under him.

2. What has Satan done? He was the seducer of Adam and Eve. From the very beginning he has demonstrated the fact that he is an expert deceiver. He approached Jesus with a threefold temptation in the wilderness and on many other occasions. He steals the Word from the heart of the ignorant or the inattentive hearer. He entered into the heart of Judas before he betrayed his Lord. He had to do with Peter's fall. It was due to his leadership that Annanias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Ghost. He hindered Paul in his ministry. He was the cause of David's terrible sin. He often appears as a friend and helper just to gain confidence and then he seeks to destroy. He has always been the real agent in the operations carried on by the man in sin, but the day will come, when after a temporary triumph, he shall be expelled from the earth and cast into the abyss.

3. How does he carry on his operations? He

is a spirit and he operates through some sort of an earthly body. It was in the form of a serpent that he came to our first parents in the Garden. In the story of Job, he comes as one of the sons of God. He came to Christ as a friendly counsellor. It seems he can function in no other way. If he can't dwell in men he is even willing to enter into the bodies of swine as he did on one occasion. But he generally uses men for his tools. He tried to get Peter. "Simon, Simon, satan hath desired you—but I have prayed that thy faith fail not." He doesn't dwell in the coke pile, in the lonely cemetery, nor in the quiet untenanted house. He dwells in men. Men are indispensable to the devil's operations. If men would not assist him and allow him to use them for his fiendish purposes, he would be powerless. And no man would operate with him were it not for the fact that he deceives him. His deception is so subtle and universal that were it not for the interference of Jesus Christ he would deceive the very elect.

4. What are his devices? They are the same as he used in the Garden of Eden with our first parents. They worked with them and they have worked ever since. He is too wise to change his methods when he knows they are successful. He always disguises himself. He came to Eve as a serpent, in the book of Job as a son of God, to Jesus as a friend. He is always very religious. He posed as a theologian when he talked with Eve. He wanted to engage her in conversation about God. He wanted her to think he was very pious and devout. He was talking about worship with Jesus on the mount. He showed Jesus that he could quote Scripture too. He tries to associate himself with good people. He was with the sons of God. He comes with them to church even in our day. He is very much in favor of religion. He

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knows too much to act in any other way. But his religion is a counterfeit so exactly imitating the genuine that he deceives many. His program so successfully carried out through the ages seeks to have people doubt that God said what the Bible says He said. Get's folks to doubt that the Bible is the Word of God. To Eve he says, "Yea hath God said?" Then he tries to show that the judgment is incredible. Hear him again say in the Garden, "Ye shall not surely die." He makes folks think that God is not a God of love because he has placed certain restrictions upon our conduct. Hear him again. "God knows that in the day you eat thereof your eyes shall be opened." As much as to say that if He were a good God, He would want them to eat that fruit and implying that He does not want them to have the very best things for their lives. So he goes on creating doubt, mistrust, suspicion and leading to disobedience. He even changes God's word to make it convey a wrong meaning. And He always aims at the weakest point in our lives. Takes Eve when she is alone, Jesus when he is hungry, and many a man when his guards are down. It is just like the old game of "Bull in the Ring" which we used to play at school. He tries to break through the ring at the weakest place.

5. What is his attitude toward men? He knows that God has prepared a place for men in heaven. He knows that it is God's will that all men should be saved. He knows that all men by elemental instinct believe in God. And he knows that God has bridged the chasm which separates this man who believes in Him from the devil by the Atonement made by Jesus Christ. And He knows that the condition of Man's salvation is that man must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. With this knowledge the

adversary sets about to defeat the purpose of God and to destroy the happy destiny of man. He does this by trying to keep men from believing in Jesus Christ. He makes them think sin is not such a terrible thing after all. That there is no need of a Savior and all that sort of thing. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of men who believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, Who is the image of God, should shine unto them." The devil cometh and taketh the Word out of their hearts lest they should believe in Him and be saved." He is the accuser of our brethren. He is the enemy of man though many men are his friends. He even tried to prevent Jesus from going to the cross where He was to save men from their sin.

6. What weapon does he always use? He always uses the same method. The instrument of his most cunning device is always deception. He is able to make the human mind think white is black and black is white, that sweet is bitter and bitter is sweet, that good is bad and bad is good, that right is wrong and wrong is right. He deceived our first parents. As I understand it he deceived Jesus for awhile on the mount; he deceived Peter and Judas.

7. He seeks to deceive the whole world.

a. Deceives folks in the Church. This is why they remain away from worship. He makes them think they are too busy, too tired, too sick, too poor, that they are not needed, not wanted, that somebody in the church seeks to do them harm, that they have no ability. He causes misunderstanding, jealousy, envy, suspicion, faultfinding and hatred.

b. He deceives folks outside of the church. He tells them their lodge is religion enough, that they are as good as church members. That they are too bad to unite with the church, that there are liars

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in the church (I found one the other day who was not in any church). He causes folks to be indifferent about religious things, leads them to postpone decision, says other religions are as good as the Christian religion, offers something new in religious ways constantly. Makes men think there is no hell, no judgment. Says nobody goes to church, that the church has lost its influence, that the church has failed. He comes along every once in awhile and offers a "Larger Gospel" to take the place of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

c. He deceives the young and the old. He leads people to do wrong things. They know they are wrong but he makes them think they will never need to suffer the consequences of their wrong doing. He plays havoc in the homes.

"So they have voted the devil out,
And of course the devil's gone,
But common folks are wondering now,
Who carries his business on."

8. The only safety. "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." That is what Simon Peter says, and he ought to know. "Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist, steadfast in the faith." He can always be repulsed by the sharp Word of God. Jesus is stronger than satan. He has entered into the strong man's house and bound him. At the name of Jesus the devil will flee. Through the blessed Word of God and the presence of the Holy Spirit we can detect his most cunning deceit. Thanks to God for His Holy Word and the abiding Spirit. We need the whole armor of God. Let us put it on to-night.

* * * * *

I want the twenty young men who are helping

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as ushers to pass the decision card to you and I will explain it. Has ever one got a card? Let me read it while you follow carefully:

“DECISION CARD

“Great Soul Winning Mission

“I am seriously concerned about the welfare of my soul and that I may receive further information regarding the WAY OF SALVATION; I desire to enroll in a class for religious instruction to be formed at the close of this Mission and continuing each Thursday evening until Easter.”

We believe this is a fair proposition. We are not trying to stampede you into the church. All that we ask is a fair chance to explain the Christian Religion. You do not commit yourself to church membership nor to the Christian Religion by enrolling in this class. For after you have received the instruction and have learned about Jesus and His plan of Salvation from those who love and serve Him, then you are to decide whether you want Him for your Lord and Master or not. We believe that it is only fair to Christ and to yourself that you make this investigation. Now while we are very quiet, thoughtful and prayerful, let all who desire to enroll in this class indicate that desire by writing your name and address on the card.

[NOTE:—A similar invitation was given at the close of each service from this night until the close of the Mission.]

The Sold Birthright

Text.—“And Jacob said unto him, sell me this day thy birthright. And he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Thus Esau despised his birthright.”—Genesis 25:31, 33.

THERE are several ways by which a possession may be transferred from one person to another.

It may be by gift. It may be bartered as in a trade—some commodity given in exchange. It may be stolen, taken without the owner's permission or knowledge and without remuneration. It may be bought or sold, transferred with the owner's knowledge and permission for a certain consideration. Or it may be loaned where the intent is to return it or its equivalent.

Some things are for sale. They are placed on the market for that purpose: land, houses, cattle bonds, and merchandise.

Some things are not for sale: gifts, heirlooms, children, health, life, character, principles, religion, innocency, virtue, manhood.

When a thing is to be sold it passes through three acts or states. It is advertised. It is presented to the prospective purchaser for his inspection. It is then transferred to the purchaser for an agreed consideration.

I want to tell you the story tonight of a man who sold something which he should not have sold. It is about a man who sold his birthright. Now a birthright is any right, privilege or possession to which a person is entitled by birth. In Bible history it was a certain right or privilege considered to belong to the first born in a family, and which was not shared by his younger brothers. The eldest son

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succeeded to his father's rank and possession as the head of the family or tribe. He inherited a double portion of his father's property. In this particular case there was a spiritual inheritance of unspeakable value. It was an event in the lives of two young men in the long ago. It happened in the evening. It is a domestic tragedy of the keenest dramatic type. The story is very familiar and will readily be recalled by even the youngest children here. It is the story of Esau and Jacob. Two brothers. One was a hunter, the other a man of affairs. Esau coming home from a long wearisome journey, tired, hungry, disappointed, the fragrant odor of cooking lentils reached his nostrils and he is almost frantic with nervous excitement. "Feed me", he shouts to his brother. "Sell me your birthright", comes back the reply. And he sold it. And thus forfeited his right to be the head of the Jewish nation, to a double portion of his father's possessions, to be the spiritual leader of his generation and to occupy an important place in the lineage of Christ. He paid a great price for his lentils.

1. Esau advertised his birthright for sale. There were three ways in which this was done.

a. Unconsciously. He had despised his opportunity to become a religious leader by flirting with heathenism. He had married a heathen girl. He had made no preparation and showed no signs of preparation for religious leadership. He was a hunter, a man of the fields and he was not a mixer with men. He showed contempt for God and the things of God. He was inconstant and unbalanced in his passions and was thus unprepared for a crisis.

b. Consciously. I have no doubt many a time when Esau was hard up for money or something to eat, he had offered to sell his birthright to Jacob

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and then probably reneged and wouldn't do it. This is implied here, for Jacob says swear to me this day. There is to be no backing out this time.

c. Observation. Jacob saw that Esau was not placing very much of a price upon his birthright. He did not seem to know or care for its value. This was apparent by his neglect and his indifference, by his marriage and his friends. You can usually tell what kind of a character a man is by knowing who his friends are. Everything after its kind. Birds of a feather flock together. It was very plain to Jacob that Esau was advertising his birthright for sale. He was doing just like many of our young boys and girls do today. They are advertising their lives for sale. If a girl offers her virtue to a stranger or vicious man, he will get her sooner or later. Bad men read the ads each day on the street and everywhere. They know the psychology of their business. Just let a girl permit a stranger to win her smiles or attention, then give him privileges of talking with her and then embraces—he will take all the rest: modesty, innocence, purity, virtue and character. She placed herself on the market. She made herself cheap and she was bought. It is the tragedy of Esau over and over again. "A woman is too frail a thing to trample the world without feeling its sting." There are some things you can't do, and there are some places you can't go unless you want to advertise yourself for sale. And when any thing is advertised, prospective buyers begin looking for a bargain.

Boys in the same way advertise themselves. They do it by loafing around pool rooms, smoking cigarettes, telling or listening to filthy stories. They lay themselves open to temptation in ways that the boy of clean and careful habits does not. A boy

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who belongs to the church, attends Sunday School, who will not smoke, lie, swear, or steal has guards around his life that the other fellow does not have. If you must advertise yourself, do it so that only the good and decent will be attracted. Let there be nothing cheap about you.

2. Esau presented his birthright to a prospective purchaser. This was the second step. The sale situation is prepared. It is prepared on the part of the seller and also on the part of the buyer. One to show to the best advantage the other to buy at a bargain if possible. The opportune time came for Jacob to buy. Esau was forced to sell. Esau is tired, weak, hungry, disgusted on account of his failure to get game. He fears death. The odor of cooking food fills his nostrils. But I don't think he was any ways near dying. Did you ever see the beat of it? Every thing was just set right for the sale and arranged by the purchaser rather than the seller. Is this not a picture of the way the situation is fixed for most of the sales of manhood and womanhood? There is the creation of a favorable environment, generally it is night, at a time of weariness. A temptation which appeals to the elemental passions. And this situation usually arranged or detected by the genius of the purchaser. He takes advantage of every opportunity afforded to accomplish his vile purposes.

3. Esau selling his birthright. This was the third step in the transaction. He actually and legally transferred his birthright to his brother for a mess of pottage. That was an expensive meal. Think of it, the rank of his father, a double portion of the inheritance, the place of the spiritual leader of his day and generation. And all he got in exchange was his hunger appeased, and if he would have been

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content to wait a few minutes that could have been done without forfeiting so much that was precious. But no, he must have his passion immediately gratified. He simply could not wait. He was afraid he was going to die. There wasn't much danger of a hearty, strapping man of the fields dying from hunger when he had only lost one meal. He lost his place in the world and was rejected by the Lord. How many a young man and young woman has suffered a similar loss! Paid just such a price as that for a night ride in an automobile, for a night's dance, or for a night card playing, or a night spent with unknown and irresponsible companions. Their lives have been advertised, presented and sold. All is lost for just a moment's pleasure for some beast. Young women, hear me, the price is too great to pay. Young man, hear me, the price is too great to pay. And yet you are paying it right along. Why will you do it?

4. There must be some protection. I am pretty fully persuaded in my own mind that there are very few of our young people who go wrong unless they first show a willingness to go wrong, unless they advertise themselves as being ready for wrong doing. If that is true then you must acknowledge your share of the responsibility. You advertised, they bought. You thought you were smarter than they and that you could get away with it, but you couldn't. And you paid the terrible price.

a. We need to be constantly on our guard. There are times and places where we are more susceptible to temptation than others. The devil knows these times and places. Evil people know them too. I know a very charming young woman who was always in the habit of going to the mid-week prayer service in her church. One beautiful Autumn eve-

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ning she didn't go. All the rest of the family went. After they were gone, she felt a bit lonely. A man called her on the phone. He wanted to make a date. He learned she was alone. He came down to the house. He took her out in an automobile and that night her life was ruined. You can't tell me that the devil didn't plan that thing.

b. We need to learn that there are somethings which are not for sale. We can't justify wrongdoing on the plea that others do it. Hunger can wait. Passions must be held in check. They must be controlled. We must practice self control.

c. Invest the life. God has given these lives to us. He will call for them some time. They belong to Him. Our lives are valuable. We have accepted them from God and with the life we have accepted the responsibility for the life. Jesus wants to protect each life and He is the only absolutely safe protection. In the closing moments of this service while we are all very quiet and very thoughtful and under the power of the Holy Spirit, will you not gather up your life and your life's assets and liabilities and place them as your deposit on the outstretched palms of the Son of God, and say to Him, "Savior, take this life of mine. Invest it. Make the most of it. I accept the security. I believe in you. I trust You?" Some day God will ask you to return the life He gave you. What will it be like? It all depends upon what you do with it. Will it be pure and true and whole: or will it be stained, tainted and ruined? Jesus is willing and worthy to receive, to invest and to secure your life; but you must be willing and actually give it to Him. Let us complete the transaction. Let us turn our lives over to Jesus. Let us do it now.

What is Lost?

Text.—“For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”—Luke 19:10.

THERE ARE four facts stated in this text about lost things. There is something lost. The lost thing has value. There is a possibility of finding it. There is somebody interested. The lost thing is a reality; it is missed; there is hope of finding it; and there is a seeker after it.

What do we mean by anything being lost? We mean that it is separated from its owner, ruined or destroyed, physically or morally as a lost ship, a lost soul. It is something parted with, or gone out of one's possession, as a lost limb or a lost sheep having wandered from or unable to find the way. It means bewildered, perplexed as a lost child. A thing to be lost must first of all be possessed. You can't lose a thing until you actually have it.

What do we mean by a thing having value? There are some things which have very little or no value such as soap bubbles and mud pies. Other things have a little value such as a ring or a doll in child life. There are other things which have great value such as the child itself to the parents, or money or property. A thing may have a commercial value and is worth the market price. There are other things which are simply priceless. They are not for sale. The place the object fills in the life very largely determines its value. The love of the thing is also a consideration as well as the possibilities that are in it. The more valuable the thing the more it is missed when it is lost.

What do we mean by a possibility of finding it?

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When a thing of value is lost the first thought is a desire to find it, to recover it. This hope is bright or dim in proportion to the possibility of finding it. If you think you can find it, you go after it, seeking. If you think there is no possibility of finding it, you just let it go. There is not much use in looking for a needle in a haystack, nor for a diamond in the Atlantic Ocean.

What do we mean by some one being interested? We mean some one has felt the loss of a valuable thing to such an extent that he endeavors to find it. He must first know about the loss, then its value. Assured on these points then he must care enough to put himself in the way to find it. Our text tells us that something has been separated from its owner; that this something has a real value; that there is a possibility of finding it, and that Jesus Christ has come into the world for that purpose.

1. There is something lost. You can tell when there is anything lost. Go to a home. See the people weeping. They are sad, full of sorrow. You know something has gone out of their lives which is precious to them. You say, "What is wrong?" They reply, "O haven't you heard, Mother is dead?" You don't need to read far in the Bible to discover that there is something lost. Our text tells us plainly that something is lost and Jesus knows about it and that He has come to the earth to seek and find it.

a. Is it a sheep? He tells us that once a shepherd did lose a sheep. He left the ninety and nine that were safe and went and searched for the lost one until he found it. A sheep has value. It called forth the effort of a faithful shepherd. There was rejoicing when he found it. But that is not what brought the Heavenly Seeker here.

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b. Is it a coin? A woman lost a coin one time. She searched diligently until she found it. It was of value to her and when it was restored to its place it caused her great joy. But it was not a lost coin that brought Jesus to the earth.

c. Was it a son? Can a son be lost? Is he of value? Is there hope? Is there a seeker? Here we have the answer to our question. It is a son that is lost. He is of value. How much then is a man better than a sheep? The materialist would say very little if any. In many respects the sheep has the advantage. The commercial man would have it that it depends upon the supply and demand. The man in the African jungle being bartered for a shot gun is not worth the price of a thorough bred merino ewe on the market of Chicago. The Christian would say the man is worth infinitely more than the sheep. "For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own life, or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?" This lost man is not hopelessly lost. There is a Seeker. Even Jesus Christ who came to seek him and to save him. Jesus is the One Who cares enough for man to miss him, to follow him, to find him, and to carry him back home on His loving breast. He is willing to leave the ninety and nine and search for the lost one. And there is rejoicing among the angels in heaven when a lost man comes back to God.

2. God's call to lost man. Since Adam in the Garden of Eden heard the call of God, "Adam, where are thou?", God has been continually calling to lost man to return to the shelter of His Divine love.

a. The law given on Mount Sinai is God's great light turned on man to show him his lost condition.

b. The promise of a Savior from the very first

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pointed man to the need of that Savior to deliver him from his sin.

c. The ancient prophets of God sounded that call of God again and again. Hear Isaiah saying to his generation, "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near; let the sinner forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him: and to our God for He will abundantly pardon." That was the Old Testament call. This showed man clearly enough that he was lost. A thing can't return unless it has been there before. Nor can it be detached unless it has first been attached. Being lost is separated from God. That is what death means. A child out in the forest far away from home knows it is lost. It knows that it has been separated from its home. You can not convince it that it has no father nor a home. But if you can show it the way home you have served the child. So men knew they were lost. They groped on in the darkness of sin.

3. Jesus comes. The fact that Jesus came to the earth proves beyond all doubt the reality of the lost condition of man. It proves man's real worth. It shows the possibility of finding him and the great heart of the Seeker is revealed.

a. Jesus seeking lost man. He seeks the valuable lost soul of man. Loud and long He calls, "Come unto Me." Over and over He says, "I am the way." He is finding men today as He seeks in the crowd, in the home, at the well, along the sea shore, at the market place, in the temple, everywhere. He saw the soul of Zacchaeus covered all over by business, wealth, bad reputation. His body was small but his soul was much smaller; but not too small for Jesus to see. Jesus saw him for He was

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looking for sinners. He found Peter, Paul, Mary Magdalene, the Syrophoenician woman, and the woman at the well. He halts the lost soul, arrests it and offers help. He would lead the soul back to God. One of the devil's most clever deceptions is to conceal the fact from men that they are lost. He gets them into a terrible spiritual stupor. These meetings are like a great search light turned on the soul. They are showing us our real selves. Jesus is seeking and finding men, and men are finding Jesus and themselves.

b. Jesus saves. Jesus not only finds the lost man but He wants to fix it so that he will not get lost again. But right here is where we must act. Christ can find us but He cannot save us unless we are willing to be saved. We must let Jesus come into our lives. "Just now your doubtings give o'er, just now reject Him no more, just now throw open the door, and let Jesus come into your life." This we must do. There must be self-committal, self-surrender, trusting every thing to Christ. It is just like trusting the guide through the forest. He knows the way. What does salvation really mean? It differs from salvage. Salvage is to rescue the ship that is in danger of wrecking and bringing it safely to harbor. But salvation is the restoration of that broken and battered ship to its more than original beauty and making her sea worthy again. Salvation is more than rescue. It is the recreation of the life unto service. Christ saves from sin unto service. "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

What God Expects of Us

Text.—“Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”—Matthew 11:28-30.

ONE OF the first questions we ask when we pass into a new environment or a new experience is, “What is expected of me now?” There seems to be a natural desire on our part to fit our lives into the social machinery of our day without causing any jar or friction. We seem to want to conform to the customs and the laws which govern the world in which we live. We do not want to be out of harmony nor out of step. So we try to determine what is expected as a citizen, a lawyer, a doctor, a farmer, a merchant, a banker, a soldier? What am I expected to do? How am I expected to dress? What am I to read? Shall I be expected to own a car and what kind? Shall I wear a green hat or a white one? We usually find out these requirements and then try to harmonize ourselves with them. Lots of concern is given to the worldly requirements. It is terrible to appear crude in society. So folks measure up to plans and specifications pretty well. It is proper that we should concern ourselves about these things—the demands of our friends—the community—the world. But it is infinitely more important that we inquire what it is that God expects of us. And when we are informed, we should concern ourselves greatly about meeting His requirements. If there should ever be any conflict between the requirements of God and those of men, we should obey God rather

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than men. So let us put the question before us this evening, "What Does God Expect of Us?"

1. Some things God does not expect of us. God does not expect us to be unnatural, abnormal nor unreasonable. He does not expect us to lie upon beds of sharp spikes to show that we are holy men. He does not expect us to live in seclusion from the rest of the world. He does not expect us to live a life time on the top of a pillar like Simeon Stylites. He does not expect us to live like Jerome of old, who watched the years glide by in a cave with a skull in hands. He does not expect us to go through the world with sad faces. He does not expect us to do anything which we cannot do with His help.

2. Some things God expected of Old Testament people. This question was asked by the people of the long ago for spiritually minded people have always been concerned about how to please God. They asked it in the days of the prophet Micah. And the answer came in these words, "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." Isaiah said, "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let them return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." And again he says, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." God surely expected the people in those days to believe in Him. He expected them to know and to obey His commandments.

3. Some things God expected of people in the

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time of Christ. In the days when Christ was on the earth, the multitudes who pressed around Him to hear Him teach and preach looked longingly into His eyes and said, "What does the Lord require of us?" The Savior looked into the hearts of the simple minded, tired people and said, "Come unto Me." To others, He said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind, and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." And again, "He that would be my disciple, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me." Peter told the people to "repent and be baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." God expected them to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. "This is the work of God, that ye believe in Him Whom He hath sent. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life: but the wrath of God abideth on him."

4. What is expected of us in this day? Surely we would not look for any less requirements than in the days of old. We are the children of God. God is our Father. We may therefore expect that God would require of us about the same things that an earthly father would require of his son.

a. Personal contact. There would most certainly be a close personal contact between father and son. Such a contact as Jesus describes when He speaks of the vine and the branches. We see it beautifully set forth in our text, "Come unto Me—take my yoke upon you and learn of me—I will give you rest." Again it appears in the close relationship of Jesus and the Father, "I and the Father are one." This requirement is the world's greatest need. This contact with Christ—the living, loving, forgiving, help-

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ful Christ. That would solve our problems of society, industry and government in a way that would satisfy all. To look at our problems through God's eyes—the Holy Bible—would give us a proper perspective. Christ wants us to have this contact. In the wilderness when He was feeding the multitude He said "Bring them hither to Me." In the valley, healing a demoniac, He said, "Bring him hither to Me." Peter sinking felt the touch of His Hand. So did the blind man and even the dead. He touched the cross and there flowed a stream of cleansing. He touched the tomb and the grave was robbed of its victory and death of its sting. He touches our lives and we become the children of God. What is this contact? It is not simply knowing about Christ, not just living in a Christian community, not having a father and mother who are Christians, not arguing about Christ, not just attending church or Sunday School and not even church membership. It is more than all that. It is organic connection. It is a new birth. See it in the life of Peter and of Paul. God expects of us in these days this vital contact with Jesus Christ and we need it.

b. Recognition. There would be recognition between father and son. God has recognized us. He surely has a right to expect us to acknowledge Him in all our ways. We should do this in business, in our social life, in the home, in the shop, every where and in all things. It is not just a question between you and your customer, but between you and your customer and God. It is not a question between you and your friends only in your social life, but between you, your friends and God. Not just you and your family in the home, but you and your family and God. Not a matter between you and the man

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who works for you but a matter between you and your workman and God.

c. Research. God expects us to seek Him in these days. He wants us to talk to Him, to pray to Him. "Come unto Me." We must seek the Lord while He may be found. Seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. Search the Scriptures. Jesus is seeking us. Let us also seek Him. "Our souls were made for God and they will not find rest until they rest in Him." The Mission offers a great opportunity for men to seek God.

d. Love God and our fellow men. The command is clear here. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy mind and with all thy strength." We need to love God, for loving Him will keep us from loving unworthy things. Love for our neighbor is just as imperative. Let us learn that God expects us to love all men, even our enemies. It was said of John, the beloved disciple, that when he was too old to preach, he would stand at the door of the temple and say to the worshippers as they passed in and out, "Little children, love one another."

e. Obedience. "Obedience is better than sacrifice." That is still true. Wise parents demand obedience from their children. We should cheerfully obey God. He expects it from us. "We ought to obey God rather than man." There is a lot of lawlessness in the world. But we Christians should be obedient, and law abiding. It is for our own good to obey God. And what more shall we say that God expects of us? He expects us to live happy, strong and fruitful lives here. And He surely expects us to dwell with Him in the Father's house of "Many Mansions", which Jesus has gone to prepare for us. He wants us to abide with Him forever. Heaven was prepared

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for men; hell was prepared for the devil and his angels. It is clearly not the will of God that any soul should perish. Let us hear the call of Jesus this night, "Come unto Me, Whosoever will let him come." O, may we wait on the Lord all our days. May we twine our lives around Him in such close and vital contact that nothing can separate us from Him in this world nor in the next. Come and sit down with us at the feet of Jesus each Thursday evening during the Lenten season and learn **THE WAY AND THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE**. Decide tonight.

Bent But Not Broken

(This Sermon was Delivered to Men Only.)

Text.—“And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, the Lord hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.”—2 Samuel 12:13.

THE BUMPER on my car was bent but I did not know it until a man at the garage told me. It was not broken, only bent. It was straightened out again. When I was with the soldiers at Camp Grant, I frequently noticed how terribly bent some of the young men were. It only appeared when they donned the uniform and stood alongside a well formed lad. The old man is bent in his body but he may never realize it until he stands by the side of a straight man. A life may be bent and the curving may have come about so gradually that the person may be unconscious of it all. He only discovers it when some one tells him or when he stands alongside a good, clean, straight life, or sees his life thru the Holy Word of God. Our watches need to be constantly corrected in order to keep exact time. Our weights and measures need to be tested from time to time so they will be true. Here is a great lesson for us. We need frequently to look at the kind of a man we would like to be and then at the kind that we are for the sake of comparison.

“Across the fields of yesterday
He sometimes comes to me,
A little lad just back from play—
The lad I used to be.

And yet he smiles so wistfully
Once he has crept within,
I wonder if he hopes to see
The man I might have been.”

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1. David's Life was bent. It was badly bent. There is surely no difference of opinion on this point. Think a moment of what he did. Think of his terrible crime with Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah. How unmanly he was. How awful his sin against God and man. Think of the treatment he gave to a valiant soldier who was at the front fighting for his king and country, while he was at home in safety. Yes, David's life was bent. A life is bent when it sins, disobeys God, when it distrusts and lies, tries to get away from God, denies God and betrays God. Thus the lives of Adam, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Jonah, and Peter were bent. A life is bent when it does not believe in Jesus Christ. A life that thinks Jesus must do all the seeking has surely curved out of line. A man's life is bent when he mistakes license for liberty, when he dreams that success can be bought without labor, when he imagines that he can sin and escape its penalty.

2. A life may be bent by heredity. Some people are not born well. They come into the world wonderfully handicapped. "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge." Sometimes the iniquity of the fathers is visited unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate the Lord. Many a boy is born with a weak body, a tendency towards disease and crime. Conquer unfavorable heredity with Christ.

b. A life may be bent by environment. Sometimes the surroundings are unfavorable for the best development of life and character. Bad books, evil companions, suggestive shows, unwholesome home life and many other things may tend to swerve the life from its straight course. Be master of environment with Christ.

c. A life may be bent by habit. The habits we

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form in early life have a lot to do with the direction of the current of our later years. Habits of thriftlessness, untruthfulness, immorality, irreverence, vice, and so on will surely mean a crooked life. Let Christ help form the habit.

d. Uncontrolled passions will bend any life. Let Christ purify the passion. Sometimes it takes but a very little thing to divert the course of a life into a very wrong channel.

“It ain’t the trees that block the trail,
It ain’t the ash or pine,
For if you fall or if you fail,
It was some pesky vine
That tripped you, that threw you down,
That caught you unawares;
The big things you can walk around
But watch the way for snares.”

2. He bent it himself. He didn’t go out with the other men to do a man’s part. He remained at home—the place of safety. He tarried at home to do the part of a criminal. His conduct here is despicable. His eyes fall upon Bathsheba in the evening. He deliberately sinned. He knew what he was doing. He was responsible for what he did. He was not an idiot but a very wise and great and powerful king. He knew the thing he did was wrong. He knew she was the wife of a brave and loyal soldier who was fighting at the front. His was a most cowardly, contemptible bit of conduct. He couldn’t blame any body else for this sin. And it is that way with the most of our sins. We have both precept and example enough to warn any of us. The trouble is that men get to thinking wrong. They know the other fellow did wrong and had to pay the awful price when it was found out; but the devil makes man after man in plain view of these facts,

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go right on and commit the same sin over and over again thinking he will never be found out or at least never be punished. All of you men here, every one of this great crowd of men know it is wrong to commit adultery, and yet some of you will go right on doing that thing. You think you can sin and escape the penalty. So did Samson. But he lost his lustful eyes. They were burned out by the hot irons of the enemy. He would not obey God, but chained, he obeyed a heathen task master and ground corn for the enemy of his people. Any fool can do what David and Samson did. Any one can bend his life. But it takes a man to resist the terrific strain and keep the life straight. David was a deceived man. Deceived by the devil. Under this deception of the devil He bent his otherwise noble life.

3. He did not seem to know his life was bent so badly. It was the old prophet Nathan with his eagle eye trained by looking unto the hills of God who told him that his life was bent. Men's lives bend so gradually, that they are oft times scarcely aware of the turning until the catastrophe comes. This is the tragedy of a bent life. The man is in terrible danger and don't know it. Men drift into sin. They become adjusted to evil things and evil surroundings and eventually lose their sensitiveness. Things which once shocked them are now passed by without a blush.

4. God revealed to David that his life was bent. He sent Nathan to him. Nathan said to him, "Thou art the man." The Lord told David very plainly where he had sinned. He showed him how he had broken one of His holy commandments. David paused a bit. He looked at his life, at his sin through the Word of God. He saw how his life was bent. O, how it was warped and twisted from the kind of a

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man he knew he ought to be. That was enough for him. Just one good look. It would be enough for any of us too, if we could only see our lives as Jesus Christ sees them. You can't depend upon your feelings about right and wrong. Your conscience is not always a safe guide. Certainly the opinion of the crowd cannot be depended upon. The lives of your most intimate friends may be curved the same degree as yours and then of course neither of you would detect that they were bent. It is only when you compare with a straight life that you see the curve. God has given us a straight life in Jesus Christ. All we need to do is to place our lives alongside His life to find out how crooked we are. God sends His Nathan to every one of us and says, "Thou art the man."

5. His life was bent but not broken. The broken life is one content to lie in sin, to wallow there, to work its way deeper and deeper into the mire. "It's nothing against you to fall down flat, but to lie there that's disgrace." I know his life was only bent and not broken because he expressed a desire to get back to God and right living. He admitted his sin. He didn't try to justify it in any way. He came clean. There was a lot of good stuff in that man with a bent life. Hear him say, "I have sinned against the Lord." That is the lovable part about this man. That shows his true greatness. He was willing to confess his sin. There is always hope for that sort of a man. But there is very little hope for the man who is always trying to justify his evil conduct. That man is not only bent, but he is broken. The life of Judas was broken. He didn't come back. He didn't try to come back.

6. God straightened out this bent life. "The Lord also hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die."

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It is the blessed word of Jesus saying to the sinner, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." God is able and willing to straighten out any bent life. David was made fit to serve and to live again. Thank God for the blessed fact of remission of sins. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Unless it repents of that sin. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Unless he finds the harvest changed by the Lord of the harvest. Men, we need God in our lives. If we are straight, we need Him to keep us straight. "I will make you," He said to the fisherman long ago. He says the same thing to us this day. Will you let Him do it? Will you let Him come into your life by coming here for six evening to study His offer of Salvation? "Come now, let us reason together."

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